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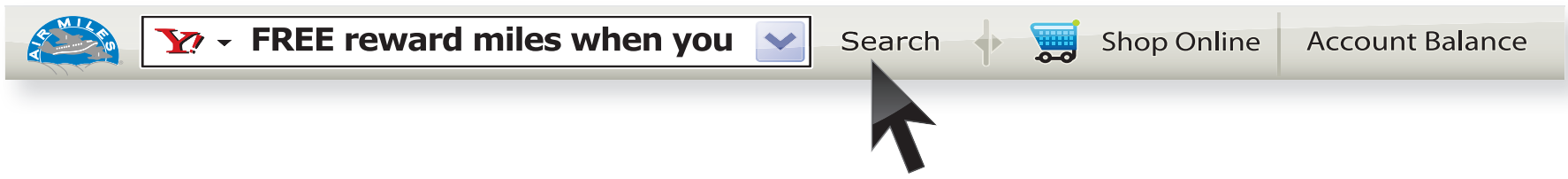

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Controversy hounds Slumdog makers

pg 22

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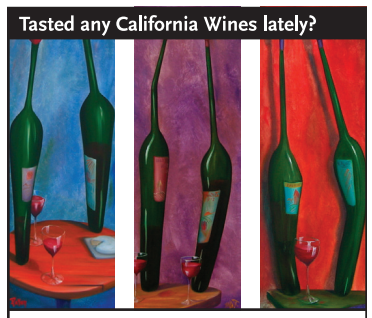
Tasted any California Wines lately?



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High costs sink ferry trial

JEFF HODSON
jeff.hodson@metronews.ca

Two Penticton teens whose father was killed when the Queen of the North sank in 2006 will likely never know what happened to him because they settled their lawsuit to avoid exorbitant trial fees.

The Queen of the North trial, scheduled to begin Monday, will not proceed, said Peter Ritchie, lawyer for Gerald Foisy's daughters Brittni, 19 and Morgan, 15.

The amount of the settlement was not disclosed.

Among the trial costs are: $15,000 in hearing fees; $25,000 for a jury; and $15,000 to $20,000 to bring 14 witnesses to Vancouver for the trial.

"My deep concern," said Ritchie, "is that when you live in a province where you're not rich enough to go the courthouse, you're not going to come anywhere close to what we call justice."

Ritchie said it would cost the teens $55,000 to $60,000 for a jury trial. In Alberta, trial fees would be $800.

"My deep concern, is that when you live in a province where you're not rich enough to go the courthouse, you're not going to come anywhere close to what we call justice."
Lawyer Peter Ritchie

In a statement, Ritchie suggested the B.C. government expected the girls to pay for the trial with babysitting money or through a bake sale at their high school.

Two inquiries, one by B.C. Ferries and one by the Transportation Safety Board, have been completed, but do not explain what happened to Foisy, nor fully what happened during the 14 minutes before the vessel crashed into Gil Island.

A trial would answer those questions, Ritchie said.

NDP Ferry critic Gary Coons said the province needs to call a judicial or public inquiry into the crash.

ShareYourViews
vancouverletters@metronews.ca

Grandma beluga expecting third calf this summer

KRISTEN THOMPSON
kristen.thompson@metronews.ca

Staff at the Vancouver Aquarium are excitedly preparing for the birth of another bouncing baby beluga whale after announcing yesterday that Aurora is pregnant.

The 20-year-old whale, whose oldest calf Qila gave birth seven months ago, is due in June or July.

Brian Sheehan, curator of marine mammals at the aquarium, said staff learned Aurora was expecting last spring but kept mum on the pregnancy for the same reasons people do.

Fertile

- The Aquarium's lone male beluga, 20-year-old Imaq, is the father.
- Beluga whales have a gestation period of 14 to 16 months.

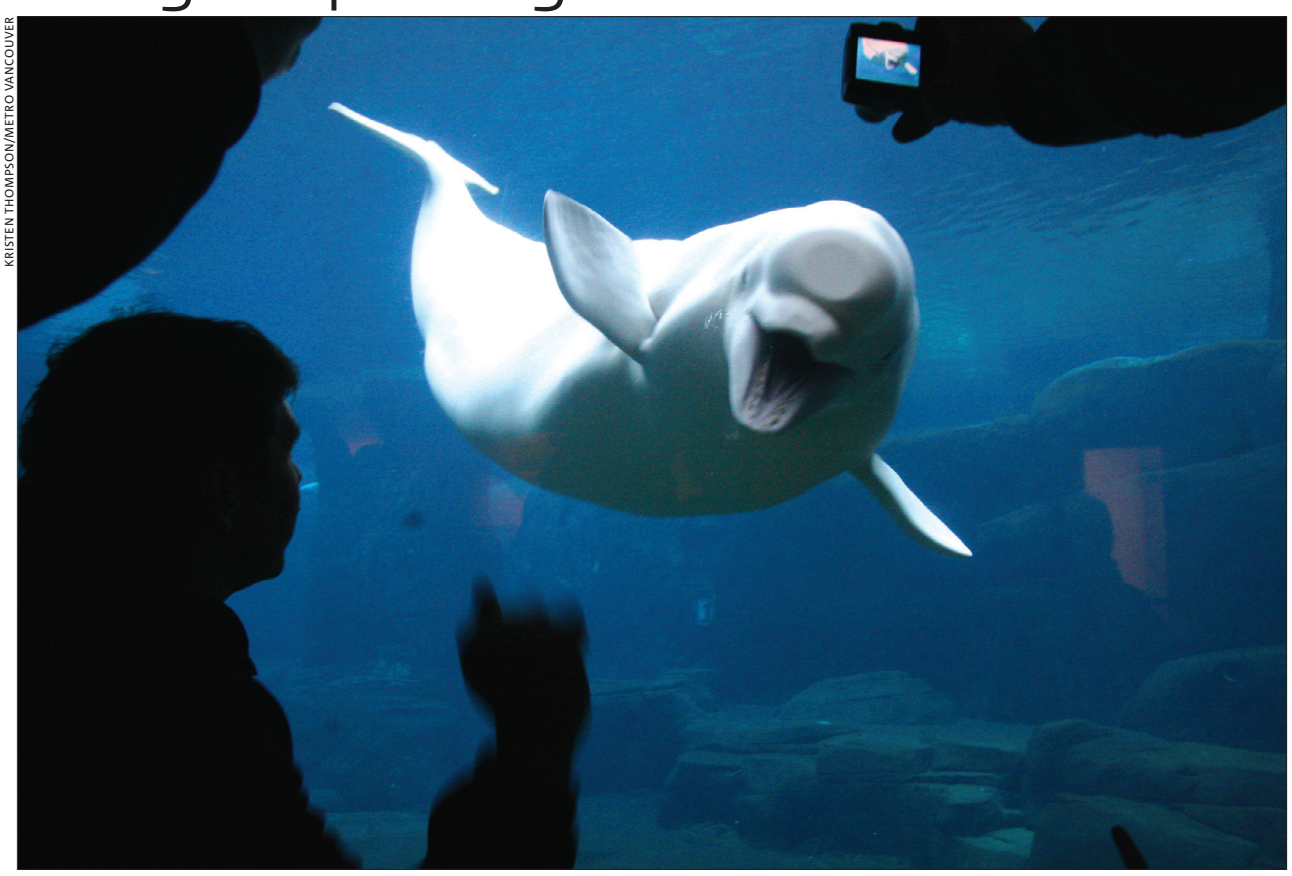
"There are a lot of things that can happen," Sheehan said. "As we enter the third trimester, it's a safer period of time."

"We'll be able to have two calves together and see how they interact with each other … and communicate. Plus, it'll be cute."

Sheehan said it's helpful for staff that Tiqa was born so recently because they'll be more familiar with the protocol.

"There's a learning curve for people who haven't been around something like that," Sheehan said. "What's normal? What should you or shouldn't you be concerned about? They'll be going into this birth being able to watch a bit closer."

KRISTEN THOMPSON/METRO VANCOUVER



Aurora, the Vancouver Aquarium's newest mother-to-be, takes a closer look at visitors to the aquarium on Thursday. Staff has announced that Aurora is pregnant with her third calf and is due in the summer.

Watch Aurora, beluga whale mom-to-be, at www.metronews.ca/vancouver

GETTY IMAGES

Mason Raymond | Willie Mitchell

Canucks take it out on each other

HOCKEY Victims of a seven-game losing streak, tension and frustration boiled over at the Vancouver Canucks' practice on Thursday.

Veteran defenceman Willie Mitchell and rookie forward Mason Raymond got into an altercation when the two jousted in front of the net, tsn.ca reports.

Mitchell punched Raymond in the head and cross-checked him hard on the shoulder. Tough guy Shane O'Brien skated to Raymond's defence and challenged Mitchell to a fight before tempers calmed. The Canucks were booed off the ice Wednesday night after a 5-3 loss to the Nashville Predators, a club-record eighth consecutive home defeat.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

MORE COVERAGE, PGS 13, 14

NFL
Super Bowl XLIII

- Marty York's prop bets, pg 15
- Top 10 Super Bowls, pg 16
- Where to watch the big game, pg 15
- Canadians on Super Bowl stage, pg 16
- Rick McGinnis on TV ads, pg 27
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Robertson proposes Mayor's Greenest City Action Team

Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson is proposing a Mayor's Greenest City Action team that will be co-chaired by Robertson and environmental lawyer David Boyd. The team would tackle a number of subjects, including promoting local food and conserving water. METRO VANCOUVER

Local

TV show dancers kick off 2009 tour

The top 10 finalists of So You Think You Can Dance Canada, including Surrey resident Arassay Reyes, left, will be performing at GM Place on Friday night to kick off the show's 2009 live tour. Dancers will then head across Canada, making stops in Kelowna, Edmonton and Calgary before going east. METRO VANCOUVER

5 civilians, 8 officers honoured for courage

AWARDS Being punched in the head by a jewelry thief didn't stop Tanya Silveira, a mall security guard.

She continued to chase the thief despite her injuries and helped police catch the suspects.

On Thursday, Silveira was one of five civilians awarded the Vancouver Police Board's Certificate of Merit for outstanding courage.

Eight police officers were also recognized. They received the Chief Constable's Commendation Award for persistence and courage.

Const. Ray Wong was one of the recipients for saving his partner, police dog Bear.

McMynn

• The police officers involved in the rescue of Graham McMynn were also recognized for their work. McMynn was abducted in April 2006 and spent eight days held by his captors.

Bear was being strangled and punched in the head repeatedly by a man suspected of breaking into an auto shop. Const. Wong heard the dog whine and rushed to his aid. He used pepper spray and physically got the attacker to release his partner. Bear escaped with two cuts above his eye and was sore and slow for a few days.

Vancouver police Chief Jim Chu and Mayor Gregor Robertson presented the awards. TARYN MCELHERAN/ FOR METRO VANCOUVER

Family pleads for son

Parents travel from India to B.C. for info on missing student

KRISTEN THOMPSON
kristen.thompson@metronews.ca

The parents of an international student from India who went missing in Surrey made an emotional plea on Thursday for anyone with information about their son to come forward.

Jaishri and Shamba Sharma scraped together enough money to fly to Vancouver to meet with police, hoping renewed interest and a $10,000 reward will garner new information about the disappearance of their son, Sahil Sharma.

The 20-year-old Kwantlen College student vanished after leaving campus on Nov. 13, and hasn't been heard from since. He'd been living with family in Surrey for two years.

Speaking through an interpreter, Sharma's parents said they would take "no action" against anyone who came forward with information, adding they just want their son back.

The missing man's father, Shamba, said he's in "deep sorrow" not knowing what happened to his son.

KRISTEN THOMPSON/METRO EDMONTON

Jaishri Sharma, centre, flanked by her husband Shamba Sharma and family friend Patty Sahota, at the Surrey RCMP detachment on Thursday.

"In their hearts, they have to believe he's fine somewhere."
Patty Sahota

His wife, Jaishri, said it's been helpful to meet face-to-face with the officers investigating the case, but it's painful to feel no closer to her son.

"It was hard for them to be in India so far away," said family friend Patty Sahota, who was interpreting for the Sharmas.

"In their hearts, they have to believe he's fine somewhere," she said.

"This is probably one of the most terrible things for any parent to experience," said RCMP Sgt. Roger Morrow. "Their son has simply vanished.

"We're left shaking our heads as to what's happened to this fellow … We'd like to bring some closure to (the family)."

Sea-to-Sky work 'on time and on budget,' Falcon says

IMPROVEMENTS The drive to Whistler is 80 per cent better, B.C.'s Transportation and Infrastructure Minister Kevin Falcon announced Thursday.

Kevin Falcon said improvements to the Sea-to-Sky Highway are almost complete and will be finished in the fall.

"The project is on time and on budget," he said. "The new highway will be safer, more efficient and reliable, and will provide economic opportunities that benefit communities along the Sea-to-Sky corridor and the entire province."

Falcon made the announcement at Doodson's Corner, 17 kilometres north of Horseshoe Bay, where a sharp corner has been transformed into a gentler, safer curve.

The Sea-to-Sky upgrades include:

- Four lanes from Horseshoe Bay to Ansell Place;
- Two-, three- and four-lane sections from north of Lions Bay to Squamish;
- Four lanes through Squamish;
- Three lanes from Squamish to Whistler.

METRO VANCOUVER

News in brief

EXPLOSION A man who was hurt in an apartment explosion in Vancouver last October has died of his injuries. Andrew Gawley, 21, had rented a room to Lana Christophersen, 26, who was targeted and killed in the blast. Her boyfriend, Jamie Michael Cliff, 34, is charged with murder in her death.

AIRPORT More than 60 jet bridges and passageways between terminals and planes at YVR will be branded by HSBC by spring 2010, the company announced Thursday. The innovative advertising initiative will be expanded to 40 airports in 17 countries.

VERDICT A 27-year-old Surrey man has been found guilty of murder in a shooting death in Whistler Village. Shane Robert Richard was convicted of killing Michael George Boutros, 26, from Coquitlam in March 2007.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

metronews.ca
WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video Watch Aurora, beluga whale mom-to-be, at **metronews.ca/vancouver**

Video York University students share their thoughts on the end of the strike, **metronews.ca/toronto**

Blog For all things Super Bowl, check out Laurence Heinen's blog all weekend at **metronews.ca/blogs**

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Streets close for NHL game

Driving around GM Place on Saturday night will be a bit tricky with parts of Dunsmuir, Cambie and Homer streets shut down to ease traffic congestion during the NHL hockey game. The streets will open again at 6 a.m. on Sunday. METRO VANCOUVER

News in brief

SENTENCED A 31-year-old Abbotsford man has been sentenced to nine years in prison after pleading guilty to possession of child pornography. Once released, Christopher Fouillard will be banned from being anywhere near children and using the Internet.

SHOOTING A Mission RCMP officer says she was forced to shoot at a suspect early Thursday after being nearly run over, news1130.com reports. She was investigating a possible break-and-enter when the suspect drove a truck full speed toward her. She fired her gun in defence, but the suspect escaped.

ASSAULT Vancouver Police are looking for more information about a man who's been charged with sexually assaulting a woman at Waterfront Terminal. Rodney Patrick Stokes, 42, was arrested on Monday and investigators are asking anyone who has experienced a similar incident to call 604-678-3768.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Left at the curb

Student suffers because buses inadequate, parent says

JEFF HODSON
jeff.hodson@metronews.ca

A Lower Mainland mother says her physically disabled son is frequently left waiting on the curb because wheelchair lifts on buses often don't work, or drivers don't know how to operate them.

Kimberley Yanko's son Daniel, 18, who is in a wheelchair, is often unable to board the community shuttle buses between his Port Moody school, Douglas College, his work placements and their Anmore home.

"You've got people in wheelchairs being left at the side of the road and I'm sure it's a daily occurrence," said Yanko. "It's not like they can get up and walk away."

She said this happens about three to four times a week. In those instances, she usually ends up paying for a taxi or taking time off work to drive him.

She spent $710 over three months in taxi fares.

Daniel, a Grade 12 student at Heritage Woods Secondary School, said he is upset and annoyed when he is left behind at bus stops.

TransLink spokesman Ken Hardie said it shouldn't have happened.

Coast Mountain Bus, he added, has taken a number of steps, including mandatory checklists to ensure lifts are working and training reviews to ensure drivers know how to operate them.

JEFF HODSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Daniel and Kimberley Yanko at a TransLink meeting Thursday.

Economic turmoil causing problems at home: Survey

KRISTEN THOMPSON
kristen.thompson@metronews.ca

FINANCES The global economic crisis is taking its tolls on jobs, home sales, pocketbooks and now relationships, with more Vancouver couples reportedly fighting over finances than in the past.

A recent study conducted by PayPal found that more than 30 per cent of Canadian couples admit they're having more disagreements than usual about finances.

Paul James, a registered psychologist in Vancouver, said money is a more prominent source of conflict among his clients lately.

"The underlying issue in money conflicts is one about identity," James said. "Who defines this part of the relationship? Who makes the decisions?"

He said in money conflicts, one person will be controlling and the other person will feel controlled.

"The person who ends up spending too much money is actually controlling the person who wants to save," said James.

"It's important for (the controlled) person to become more assertive and to say, 'I don't like how you're defining money in our relationship and I want to have my say.' "

He said he sometimes suggests couples see a financial adviser.

"It's important to have some leadership around money and it's best if that leadership is shared equally so that both people have a say and feel heard."

Hiding purchases

- One in 10 Canadians say they hide purchases from their partners, with almost twice as many women, or 16 per cent, admitting to the deceit, according to the PayPal Can't Buy Me Love survey.

Former MP to talk in Surrey

JEFF HODSON
jeff.hodson@metronews.ca

ECONOMY Don't buy houses and aim to reduce your debt because 2009 is going to be a "stinker," said a former Ontario MP who predicted the Lower Mainland's real estate crash.

Garth Turner said Canadians are in a period of time comparable to 1930 — following the stock market crash, but before the Great Depression.

Garth Turner

"We're in a very difficult, murky period of time," said Turner. "Governments are trying to do everything they can to keep this from becoming a deflationary spiral."

Turner's book, Greater Fool, predicted the recent meltdown. His new book, After The Crash, warns people to prepare for a tough couple of years.

His advice:

- Don't buy houses because prices should decline for at least the next two years.
- If you plan on selling your home, do it now, because prices are only going to go down.
- Do everything you can to reduce debt, including getting a bank loan to pay off credit cards.
- Renegotiate your mortgage to take advantage of dropping interest rates and change monthly payments to weekly to pay off the mortgage faster.

Turner is speaking in Surrey on Feb. 3 at the Northview Golf and Country Club.

Dziekanski appeared drunk: Witnesses

INQUIRY Witnesses who saw Robert Dziekanski at Vancouver International Airport moments before he died said he was aggressive and appeared to be drunk, a public inquiry into his death heard Thursday.

The Braidwood Inquiry heard 38 audio and video clips, including telephone calls to police, recorded before and after the Polish immigrant was Tasered multiple times by RCMP in October 2007. He died moments later.

One audio clip was of a woman who said Dziekanski was throwing suitcases around the terminal, adding she was worried about the safety of her son who was arriving on an international flight.

Another audio clip was of a security guard asking for an ambulance after Dziekanski had been Tasered.

The last recording was of a caller telling a 9-1-1 operator that Dziekanski had died.

Conflict?

- Other witnesses who have testified at the inquiry have said Dziekanski appeared calm earlier that day.

METRO VANCOUVER

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B.C. RCMP accused of torture will not be investigated

Three Prince George RCMP officers slammed by a judge for deliberately losing or destroying video surveillance tape alleged to show the "torture" of a handcuffed man with a Taser will not face an internal code of conduct investigation, an RCMP spokesperson said Thursday. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

Canada

Nortel abandons WiMax

Nortel Networks Corp., the ailing telecom equipment provider, has decided to abandon its WiMax wireless technology business as it restructures in bankruptcy protection. In the months leading up to its filing for bankruptcy protection, Nortel hailed WiMax — essentially a type of fast, next-generation wireless technology — as very promising. REUTERS

Health **Mad cow breakthrough?**

CALVIN SUN/REUTERS

Christoph Sensen, right, and Bob Church, both faculty members of the University of Calgary, stand on the prairie at a ranch outside Airdrie, Alta. They have developed a blood test that can diagnose fatal chronic wasting disease in elk, and believe it may provide a cheap way to screen cattle for mad cow disease.

News in brief

DISCOVERY Southern Alberta has its very own Stonehenge, claims a University of Alberta professor. Gordon Freeman says about 70 km east of Calgary, there's an open-air stone temple that marks the changing seasons and the phases of the moon. "Genius existed on the prairies 5,000 years ago," he said. He has published his findings in a new book titled Alberta's Stonehenge. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Tories set to toughen consumer safety laws

More than a year after Prime Minister Stephen Harper complained about Canada's outdated consumer safety regulations, the federal Conservatives are taking another shot at toughening the laws.

The Canada Consumer Product Safety Act introduced yesterday would give Ottawa new power to enforce the recall of unsafe products and slap big fines on corporate offenders who produce them.

"This will modernize the legislation. It will also equip the government with new tools to act quickly and effectively," Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq said.

Overhaul

- The bill is an effort to overhaul existing laws that date back 40 years and have left the government relying on manufacturers to voluntarily recall unsafe products, officials say.

"As it is right now, we cannot recall any products. There's no reporting of incidents. It's very, very weak," she said in an interview.

The legislation was first promised by Harper in December 2007. The proposed regulations were introduced into Parliament last April, but never became law because of the September election call.

Canadian consumers have seen a string of worrisome product recalls. One recall, prompted by a Torstar News Service investigation, involved millions of RCMP-themed toys because they contained dangerously high levels of lead and posed a choking hazard to children.

"It is about the lead in children's toys, it's about the cribs that are not safe. So I think there is huge interest in seeing this go through," Aglukkaq said, explaining the need for new laws. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

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Aunt charged with murder
A 24-year-old woman was charged Thursday with the second-degree murder of her four-year-old niece in Edmonton. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

Canned for picking Cherry's brain

Ontario teen dismissed for approaching HNIC commentator

Don Cherry loves it when kids talk to him. But an Oshawa, Ont., teen has been banned from his job as a volunteer cameraman at the General Motors Centre for doing just that.

Billy Steele, 17, was told that approaching a celebrity like Cherry at a special event two-and-a-half weeks ago was against the rules.

The company that runs the centre, Global Spectrum, said he's no longer welcome in the building in his capacity as a volunteer with Rogers TV, which covers OHL games there.

The edict has outraged Billy's father, Bill Steele, who has filed a human rights complaint alleging workplace discrimination in the workplace because his son has a severe learning disability.

"I resent the fact that (they've) brought my name into firing a young kid who ... asks me about my ties."
CBC commentator Don Cherry

And Cherry is "infuriated" with Global Spectrum over the incident.

"I resent the fact that (they've) brought my name into firing a young kid who comes up and asks me about my ties," he said in a phone interview.

The brief encounter on Jan. 14 wasn't an issue for the flamboyant Hockey Night commentator.

"Oh, geez, please, me complain? I love it when kids come up and are friendly like that. I welcome kids — that's why I wear those goofy ties," he said, offering to talk to Global Spectrum to get Billy his job back.

Cherry didn't complain, but Billy had been warned "numerous times" about violating procedures, said Vince Vella, general manager of the city-owned sports and entertainment facility.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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TONY BOCK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Billy Steele, a 17-year-old hockey fan, has a volunteer job as a cameraman with Rogers TV. Two weeks ago, he was banned from working at the General Motors Centre in Oshawa, Ont., because he broke a rule by talking to Don Cherry.

Arar shocked by testimony linking him to terrorists

ALLEGATION Torture victim Maher Arar says he was shocked when he learned earlier this month that Pentagon prosecutors had linked him to a terrorist safe house in Afghanistan through an interrogation of Omar Khadr.

"It was shocking," Arar said last night before a panel discussion about media coverage of his case was held at the University of Toronto. "For a week at least, I have been in deep depression mode," Arar said.

"For a week at least, I have been in deep depression mode."
Maher Arar

An FBI interrogator told a military court in Guantanamo Bay in 2002 Khadr said he recognized Arar in a photo because the Ottawa engineer had stayed at terrorist "safe houses."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

News in brief

ONTARIO The longest strike yet at an English-language university in Canada will end when classes at Toronto's York University resume on Monday. The strike shut down the campus on Nov. 6 when 3,340 teaching assistants, contract faculty and graduate assistants walked off the job. The Ontario legislature passed back-to-work legislation yesterday, ending the three-month strike. It was the third strike in 12 years at the school.

DEFICIT Ontario will be awash in red ink for the foreseeable future, but Ontario Finance Minister Dwight Duncan insists there is no danger of returning to the crippling shortfalls of the early 1990s. Duncan acknowledged yesterday the budget he is set to introduce in late February or early March will boast a more sizeable deficit than the current $500-million shortfall.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Breast-cancer genes increase severity of prostate cancer, study shows
The so-called breast-cancer genes BRCA1 and BRCA2 can raise the risk that a man who develops prostate cancer will get an aggressive form of the disease, U.S. researchers reported. Certain mutations in the genes indicated a man was at risk of more aggressive cancer and should be treated right away. REUTERS

World

Implants do not raise cancer risk

Women with cosmetic breast implants do not appear to have a higher risk of developing any type of cancer, even years after the surgery, according to a new study. Researchers who studied more than 6,200 women found the long-term risk of developing breast cancer was lower than the norm, and there was no change in the odds of suffering from other cancers.
REUTERS

Openly gay politician to be named Iceland's interim PM

ICELAND Social Affairs Minister Johanna Sigurdardottir is widely expected to be named as an interim prime minister in a new government this week ahead of possible early general elections in the coming months.

Sigurdardottir, 66, is a lesbian, and may be the first openly homosexual world leader. Her spouse is Jonina Leosdottir, an Icelandic author and playwright.

A Social Democrat, Sigurdardottir was proposed as a possible choice for the job by Social Democratic Alliance head Ingibjorg Gisladottir, who was given the mandate this week to form a new government after an existing coalition collapsed. REUTERS

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Obama signs pay-equity law

U.S. President Barack Obama signed his first bill into law Thursday, handing his labour and women's rights backers a victory by reversing a 2007 U.S. Supreme Court decision that made it harder to sue for pay discrimination.

With the woman for whom the law was named at his side, Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act at a White House ceremony. The Democratic-led Congress passed the measure this week and many leaders attended the signing.

"Signing this bill today is to send a clear message: That making our economy work means making sure it works for everybody, that there are no second-class citizens in our workplaces," said the Democratic president.

Pay equity was a sensitive issue during the presidential election campaign last year, especially among labour unions and women voters. On average, U.S. women are paid 23 per cent less than men, while minority women receive even less.

Criticism

- Some Republicans and business leaders have expressed concern the measure could trigger an explosion of lawsuits based on old claims, discourage employers from hiring women and undermine efforts to stem the recession.

Ledbetter is an Alabama woman who discovered after 19 years on the job at Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. that she was the lowest-paid supervisor at her plant despite having more experience than several male co-workers.

A jury found she was the victim of discrimination.

But during the Bush administration, the Supreme Court in a 5-4 decision reversed what critics described as decades of legal precedent by declaring that discrimination claims must be filed within 180 days of the first offence. REUTERS

ROBERT PRATTA / REUTERS

Public- and private-sector workers demonstrate during a protest march Thursday in Lyon, France.

French unions call massive strike

LABOUR Hundreds of thousands of teachers, nurses, factory workers and plumbers marched through French cities on Thursday to demand raises and job protection.

The demonstrations were the high point of a nationwide one-day strike called by France's eight main trade unions to try to persuade President Nicolas Sarkozy and business leaders to do more to help ordinary people overcome the economic crisis.

But the stoppage, billed as a "Black Thursday," did not bring France to a halt as others have done.

One in three schoolteachers and rail workers and one in four workers at the post office and the electricity company EDF walked off the job.

In a rare show of unity, the unions drew up a joint list of demands for the government and companies, demanding that Sarkozy drop reforms that they see as a threat to public services and aim stimulus measures at consumers rather than companies.

Specific demands included better pay and conditions for public transport workers, as well as dropping plans to reform the health sector and cut 13,500 jobs in education this year. REUTERS

Economic turmoil

- France's woes are less severe than Spain's or Britain's, but its jobless rate is rising, hitting 2.07 million in November, up 8.5 per cent. Unions say Sarkozy's 26 billion euro stimulus plan is not enough.

Harassment forces Afghan girls from attending school

MIDDLE EAST Every day, as they walked to school, Maryam Mansoor and her sister ran a gauntlet of intimidation and harassment by youths with knives.

"A lot of my classmates ... don't come to school anymore because they fear the boys' harassment and kidnappings," said Maryam, 18, who eventually quit school at her concerned father's urging.

From acid attacks, torching of schools and sexual assault, violence is dashing the dreams of thousands of Afghan girls and women who are thirsty for an education that may help rejuvenate the economy and society of their country.

In villages, particularly the deeply conservative south, the Taliban have torched schools, killed female students and teachers and attacked schoolgirls with acid.

In relatively safer and less conservative Kabul, girls are facing abuse, sexual harassment and kidnappings.

The government says increased harassment and the threat of kidnapping could leave a generation of young Afghans deprived of an education as they retreat to the safety of their homes. REUTERS

News in brief

PIRACY Kenya has agreed to prosecute Somali pirates captured by the U.S. Navy, allowing U.S. forces to begin taking piracy suspects into custody on the high seas, the Pentagon said Thursday. The pact removes a major obstacle that prevented the U.S. Navy from capturing pirates that have vexed international shipping off the African coasts for months and driven up shipping insurance rates.

ABKHAZIA Russia may base warplanes in Georgia's rebel Abkhazia region in support of a naval base soon to be constructed there, Interfax news agency reported Thursday. NATO countries expressed concern on Wednesday at reports quoting military sources that Russia planned a naval base in one of two breakaway regions Georgia seeks to reclaim. There has been no Kremlin confirmation. REUTERS

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No alcohol for children under 15, Britain warns parents

Parents should not let their children drink any alcohol until they are 15, the British government said Thursday after a review of medical evidence. The advice is part of government efforts to reduce youth drinking. A third of a million British children aged 11-15 were getting drunk every week, an official said. REUTERS

Senate ousts Blagojevich

Governor accused of selling Obama's seat impeached 59-0

Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich was convicted of impeachment charges and removed from office Thursday, eight weeks after he was arrested on charges of trying to sell the U.S. Senate seat once held by U.S. President Barack Obama.

The Illinois Senate, acting as a jury, voted 59-0 to oust the second-term Democrat immediately. The lawmakers also voted by the same margin to bar him from ever holding public office again in America's fifth most populous state.

"How can you throw a governor out of office who is clamouring and begging and pleading with you ... to prove his innocence?"
Rod Blagojevich

Before the vote, members of the Senate, where Democrats outnumber Republicans 37-22, called Blagojevich "devious," "crass," "corrupt," "inept," "a liar," "a hypocrite" and "irresponsible."

Blagojevich had pleaded with the body hours earlier, asking, "How can you throw a governor out of office who is clamouring and begging and pleading with you to give him a chance to bring witnesses in to prove his innocence?"

It was the only defence he mounted during the four-day trial.

Blagojevich skipped the chance to make a formal defence because, he said, the rules restricted him from either calling the witnesses he needed or playing in full the wiretapped conversations that led to charges.

Democratic Lt.-Gov. Patrick Quinn was sworn in almost immediately.

Blagojevich has not been indicted on criminal charges. REUTERS

Israel must investigate war-crime charges, UN envoy says

GAZA Israel must investigate allegations that its army violated international law during its three-week war against Hamas militants in the Gaza Strip, the new U.S. envoy to the United Nations said Thursday.

"We expect Israel will meet its international obligations to investigate and we also call upon all members of the international community to refrain from politicizing these important issues," Ambassador Susan Rice said.

Rice said that Hamas had been guilty of violating international law through rocket attacks against Israeli civilians and the use of civilian facilities to provide protection for attacks.

Israel fired on several UN installations in Gaza, including schools, where hundreds of Palestinians had been seeking shelter. Israel rejects allegations that its army was guilty of war crimes. REUTERS

Hamas opponent murdered: Brother

- A Palestinian man has accused Hamas militants of torturing and killing his brother for publicly criticizing them.
- Osama Atallah, a teacher, was a supporter of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Fatah movement — the enemy of Hamas, which drove Fatah out of Gaza in 2007.

Moscow **A Communist party**

RIA NOVOSTI/POOL/REUTERS

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev helps Cuban leader Raul Castro into a jacket at Medvedev's official residence Thursday. Medvedev invited Castro for a dinner of kebabs, salted wild boar fat and vodka to honour the Cuban leader's first visit to the country in more than two decades.

News in brief

POWER More than 770,000 homes and businesses in the U.S. were still without power Thursday morning after snow and ice storms on Jan. 27 and 28 left more than 1.3 million customers in the dark from Oklahoma to Pennsylvania, local utilities reported. The storms hit Kentucky the hardest, leaving more than half a million customers without power. Officials said it could take up to two weeks to restore service to all 381,000 affected customers. REUTERS

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Child, Family and Community Studies	Thur, Feb 19	5pm	2201
Aboriginal Child and Youth Care Stream ▸ Behavioural Interventionist ▸ Child and Youth Care Counsellor Diploma ▸ Classroom and Community Support ▸ Community Social Service Worker ▸ Early Childhood Education ▸ Therapeutic Recreation (Bachelor's Degree and Diploma) ▸ Youth Justice			
Child and Youth Care (Bachelor's Degree)	Thur, Feb 19	5pm	1640
Commerce and Business Administration	Thur, Feb 19	5pm	2201
Accounting ▸ Associate of Arts Degree (Economics) ▸ Business Administration (Bachelor's Degree) ▸ Business Management ▸ Computing Science and Information Systems ▸ Financial Services Management ▸ Hotel and Restaurant Management ▸ Marketing Management ▸ Office Administration ▸ University Transfer			
Disability and Applied Behaviour Analysis	Thur, Feb 19	5pm	1630
Health Sciences	Thur, Feb 19	5pm	2201
Dental Assisting ▸ Dispensing Optician			
Performing Arts	Thur, Feb 19	5pm	2201
Music ▸ Stagecraft ▸ Theatre			
Print Futures: Professional Writing	Tues, Feb 17	5pm	1808
Sport Science	Thur, Feb 19	5pm	2201
Physical Education and Coaching (Bachelor's Degree) ▸ Physical Education Instruction (Post-Degree Diploma) ▸ Sport Science			
Travel and Tourism	Thur, Feb 12	6pm	4247
University Transfer Arts (Associate Degrees)	Thur, Feb 19	5pm	2201
University Transfer Science (Associate Degrees)	Thur, Feb 19	5pm	2201
Veterinary Office Animal Care Certificate	Thur, Feb 5	6pm	4241

DAVID LAM CAMPUS	DATE	TIME	ROOM
Animal Health Technology	Tues, Feb 17	5pm	A1470
Commerce and Business Administration	Tues, Feb 17	5pm	A1470
Accounting ▸ Associate of Arts Degree (Economics) ▸ Business Administration (Bachelor's Degree) ▸ Business Management ▸ Computing Science and Information Systems ▸ Financial Services Management ▸ Hotel and Restaurant Management ▸ Marketing Management ▸ Office Administration ▸ University Transfer			
Health Sciences	Tues, Feb 17	5pm	A1470
Dental Assisting ▸ Dispensing Optician ▸ Health Care Support Worker ▸ Nursing (Bachelor of Science) ▸ Psychiatric Nursing (Bachelor of Science, Diploma)			
Sport Science	Tues, Feb 17	5pm	A1470
Physical Education and Coaching (Bachelor's Degree) ▸ Sport Science			
University Transfer Arts (Associate Degrees)	Tues, Feb 17	5pm	A1470
University Transfer Science (Associate Degrees)	Tues, Feb 17	5pm	A1470

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Comment & Views

Comment

EPFX offers 'miracle' cures

Machine being sold in Canada as unsupported claims grow

Marketplace

In my years as a reporter covering health stories, I thought I'd seen it all. But nothing compares to my investigation into the latest "miracle" machine that is sweeping Canada.

It's called the EPFX — Electro Physiological Feedback Xrroid. You can find it in alternative health care clinics, chiropractor and massage therapists. A session costs up to $200.

To buy the machine and start operating as an EPFX practitioner costs about $20,000 — not exactly chump change. The company's inventor claims he's selling about 40 devices a month in Canada (do the math — that's $800,000 a month).

The device is hooked up to a patient with straps that wrap around the ankles, wrists, and forehead. The device supposedly reads the body's reactivity to various frequencies, and then sends back other frequencies to make changes in the body.

Sound complicated? We thought so, too. But when we asked practitioners to explain it, they said it was too hard for anyone but the inventor to understand. We heard what practitioners promise the EPFX can do — and the claims are amazing. Not only can the device treat AIDS and Parkinson's, some tell us it has made cancer disappear. That's what Karen McBeth hoped when she bought an EPFX to treat her bone cancer. The Seattle woman shelled out almost $20,000 after being told the device would heal her. Sadly, it didn't, and McBeth died.

Bill Nelson — the inventor of the EPFX.

In North America, the EPFX is only licensed as a biofeedback device for stress reduction. Practitioners aren't allowed to claim it cures disease — because there's no scientific proof that it does.

But that doesn't stop practitioners from singing its praises.

So we travelled to Hungary, to talk to inventor Bill Nelson. When we met, he was dressed as his female alter-ego, Desire Dubounet. Nelson says he's part female. And he made some pretty outrageous claims.

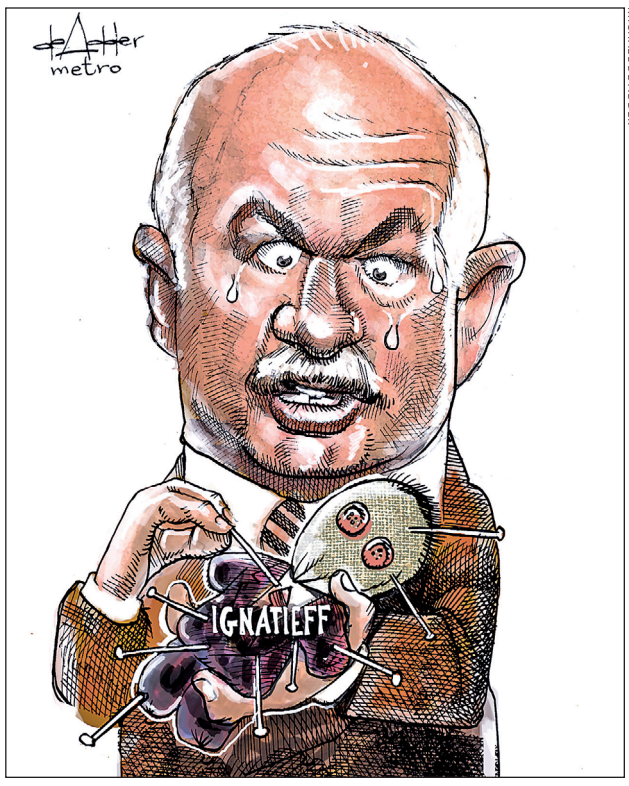
Nelson talked to us about a study he did on 7,000 cancer patients. After a few sessions on his medical device, he claimed that 2,000 people didn't have cancer anymore.

Hard to believe? It should be.

We asked for studies to back up claims about this miracle machine, but the inventor couldn't provide a single study that would stand up to scientific scrutiny.

And still, vulnerable people are buying in. And Health Canada is allowing the machine to be marketed to reduce stress — as a biofeedback device — so no one's clamping down on false claims, while sales continue to grow.

Erica Johnson is a journalist and co-host of CBC News: Marketplace, Canada's award-winning consumer affairs show. CBC News: Marketplace airs each Friday night at 8:30 p.m. (9 p.m. NT) on CBC Television.



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Quote of the Day

"Another Conservative budget rubber-stamped by another Liberal leader. It's official: Michael Ignatieff failed his first big test as Liberal leader."

— A televised NDP ad on Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Views

Nothing is certain these days, not even Starbucks coffee

UrbanCompass

Yet another sign the Apocalypse is near: Starbucks is closing more stores and laying off more people.

The java giant established its Canadian beachhead in Vancouver back on March 1, 1987.

It's approaching the 22nd anniversary of the opening of its first store in the Sea Bus terminal.

It would not be too much of a stretch to argue that all this world class city nonsense started when it became clear that what was once a very hip outfit decided Vancouver was the logical place to invade Canada.

Admit it; despite all the grumbling about U.S. domination and the threat to local coffee sovereignty, we were delighted.

We were even delighted when, in a monument to franchised excess, Starbucks established two stores at the same intersection, Robson and Thurlow; so you don't have to cross the street when you're at the epicenter of the Robson Street stroll.

Starbucks has become as much a part of Vancouver folklore as the steam clock or the hollow tree.

But hard times are fine-grinding the Seattle-based firm: CEO Howard Schultz announced this week the company is laying off 6,700 people and closing 300 stores on top of the 600 underperformers already earmarked.

You could argue this will hardly make a dent in the Starbucks landscape, especially when one source counts 363 Starbucks locations in B.C. alone.

Well, a year ago who thought the world's largest insurance companies and banks would turn into a bunch of corporate welfare bums? Nothing is certain, not even Starbucks.

And, as I drain my third cup of French blend (dark roast), I'm left pondering the grounds at the bottom of my (Starbucks) mug, looking for clues and portents.

Many of us have acquired a taste for dark-roasted coffee that would have left our forebears clutching their throats and gagging.

We can blame Starbucks for turning us into a city of coffee snobs who pretend to know the difference between beans from Ethiopia or Indonesia.

We can't even order a cup of coffee anymore … make mine an Americano.

We also have to admit that Starbucks has done nothing to stifle local coffee creativity.

Delaney's, Bean Around the World, JJ Bean, Artigiano, and Blenz are just a few successful emulators of the Starbucks model.

But the real legacy of Starbucks is the cost of a cup of coffee.

Thanks to its audacious marketing, an ordinary large cup of coffee (charmingly referred to as a "Venti") costs nearly two and a quarter.

Even the ghost of Tim Horton sells his so-called extra-large for $1.68.

Call me old-fashioned, but I remember when a cup of coffee cost a quarter, hold the toonie, refills for free.

Maybe, all that venti-misto-americano woo-hoo aside, that's all it's worth.

Meanwhile, I raise my extra-hot low foam, triple grande non-fat latte in a salute to Starbucks.

Whatever happens, Vancouver will never be the same.

Paul Sullivan is a Vancouver-based journalist and owner of Sullivan Media Consulting.

It's your turn to tell others what you think. E-mail your thoughts and opinions to: vancouverletters@metronews.ca
Letters must include sender's full name, address and phone number – street name and phone numbers will NOT be published. We reserve the right to edit letters.

Cloning getting cheaper all the time

A South Korean biotech firm has unveiled a new cloning technology using stem cells derived from fat tissue, which increases success rates. The firm also says it costs 50 per cent less than current methods, which cost upwards of $100,000 US. **REUTERS**

Business

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Confidence sagging: Think-tank

SURVEY Business confidence in Canada deteriorated in the fourth quarter and companies are expected to curb investment plans in 2009 as they deal with a weaker economy, the Conference Board of Canada said Thursday.

The index of business confidence fell 9.1 points in the final three months of 2008 to 68.9 points. It is the index's sixth quarterly decline, the board said, citing a survey it conducted in beginning of January.

The index has fallen below that level only twice in the past: in the third quarter of 2001 and during the 1990-91 recession. In both cases the drop preceded a squeeze in business capital investment. The pattern is set to repeat itself in 2009, the board said.

"Faced with a progressively grimmer economic outlook, firms are significantly curtailing their investment intentions," it said. **REUTERS**

By the numbers

- Nearly 60 per cent of firms surveyed believe general economic conditions will be worse in six months, while less than 10 per cent expect an improvement.

Tories fear U.S. protectionism

The Conservative government is concerned about protectionist pressures in the United States but is confident the U.S. administration will live up to its treaty obligations, the federal Industry minister said on TV yesterday.

Tony Clement, speaking on the CBC program, News: Morning, said the government is building a very strong relationship with the new U.S. administration and that President Barack Obama's trip to Ottawa on Feb. 19 will provide a good opportunity for the two countries and major trading partners to strengthen ties.

"The United States has treaty obligations that they've signed onto."
Tony Clement

The U.S. Congress passed a new $819 billion US stimulus package Wednesday that included a clause that said funds made available in the act can be used only on projects in which all of the iron and steel for them are produced in the United States.

The U.S. Senate has yet to vote on the package.

Clement expressed his concern: "The U.S. Congress is a place where you get manifestations of protectionist pressures, there's no doubt about that.

"The United States has treaty obligations that they've signed onto, NAFTA is one, the World Trade Organization is another, and we expect the United States to live up to its treaty obligations of open and fair trade."

Canada exports about $6 billion in steel to the U.S. annually. **REUTERS**

PM talks tough

- Prime Minister Stephen Harper has asked Washington to withdraw the "Buy America" provision from the stimulus plan, suggesting it violates WTO rules.

Internet medium of choice for youth, study says

MEDIA Internet usage is growing so quickly across Canada that it will surpass television as the medium of choice in the key 25 to 34-year-old group in under a decade, says a new study presented at Advertising Week in Toronto.

The web ranks over print media, but below TV and radio, the Canadian Media Usage Trends Study found. TV and web advertising ranked equally among 18 to 24-year-olds.

"People carry their media habits forward as they age" so the high Internet usage among 18 to 24 year-olds today will vault it ahead to the top spot over TV among 25-to-34 year-olds in eight years, predicted Rob Young of research agency PHD Canada, which conducted the study. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

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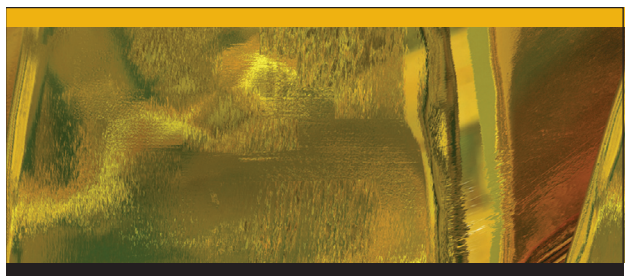
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So much for Freedom 55

RETIREMENT As stock market losses take a bite out of retirement savings and pension plans, 48 per cent of employed Canadians believe they will work beyond the customary retirement age of 65, according to a survey by Sun Life Financial Canada.

The average retirement age in Canada has hovered around 61 in recent years, the survey noted.

A third of respondents said they had changed their retirement plans based on recent economic turmoil. Significantly, it also found that nine per cent had dipped into their retirement nest eggs in the previous three months.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

In brief

CRITICISM U.S. President Barack Obama thinks it's "outrageous" Wall Street firms paid out $18.4 billion US in bonuses to employees, despite receiving billions of dollars in aid from the government, a White House spokesman said.

EARNINGS The U.S. division of Ford Motor Co. reported a record $14.6 billion US full-year loss yesterday but said it would have the cash to survive without a U.S. government bailout. The automaker plans to cut 2,500 white-collar-jobs. **REUTERS**

Bosh back to all-star game
Raptors forward Chris Bosh was named to his fourth straight NBA Eastern Conference all-star team Thursday night. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports

JOHN.CHICK@METRONEWS.CA

Stars shoot down Wings

NHL RESULT

Stars 4, Red Wings 2

Chris Conner netted the game-winner as part of a three-goal first period, leading Dallas past Detroit 4-2 Thursday night at Joe Louis Arena.

Steve Ott, Jere Lehtinen and Loui Eriksson also lit the lamp for the Stars, who have won three games in a row for the first time all season. Brad Richards assisted on two scores and Marty Turco picked up his first career regular season win in Detroit after making 22 saves. Marian Hossa and Andreas Lilja scored once each for the Red Wings, who have lost a season-high four straight games.

Chris Osgood took the loss after allowing three goals on 12 shots in the opening 20 minutes. Ty Conklin played the remainder of the contest and gave up one goal on 11 shots.

Down by two goals, the Red Wings put together an uncharacteristically weak third period, only putting four shots on net.

Any chance the Wings had of a late comeback was squashed when Tomas Holmstrom was penalized for delay of game for closing his hand on the puck, plus unsportsmanlike conduct with two minutes remaining.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

DAVE STAFFORD/GETTY IMAGES

The Stars' Steve Ott celebrates his first-period goal.

NBA Suns host Spurs

REUTERS

Tony Parker shoots over Steve Nash in Thursday night NBA action in Phoenix. San Antonio won the game 114-104.

Things get Wild

Saturday

VS

7 p.m., CBC/TEAM 1040

How low can they go? The Canucks have dropped seven consecutive games and a franchise worst eight straight on home ice. Vancouver will host a Minnesota squad that plays in Calgary tonight and has yet to beat the Canucks this season. The locals have three wins against the Wild thus far, including a 2-0 win at GM Place back on Nov. 8.

NO KILLER INSTINCT: The Canucks have allowed power-play goals in four straight game, with the league's three worst power-play units (Phoenix, Nashville and Columbus) scoring six goals on 13 chances during that stretch.

DEADLY DUO: Henrik Sedin's assist on Wednesday night gave he and brother Daniel a combined 851 points in their careers, making them the highest scoring twins in NHL history.

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de Guzman criticizes CSA

Canadian midfielder Julian de Guzman blasted the Canadian Soccer Association on Thursday, saying the organization does not take the game seriously. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Canucks too good to struggle for too long

TheHockeyNews

Big Story No. 1: A top-flight goaltender with a long-term injury.

Big Story No. 2: A superstar forward who was absent for the first 40 games.

Big Story No. 3: A lengthy losing streak heading into the all-star break.

Those were the three biggest storylines in the first half of the Vancouver Canucks' 2008-09 season; at least, the three biggest stories that the team hoped wouldn't come to pass, but did.

Of course, there were some positive storylines in the first half, too.

Remember when everyone was worried about who would provide the secondary (ie. non-Sedin-related) scoring? That's no longer an issue as Pavol Demitra, Kyle Wellwood, Steve Bernier, Ryan Kesler and Mason Raymond are all on track for 20-plus goals.

Vancouver's blueline depth — and durability — was questioned, but the top-four of Kevin Bieksa, Willie Mitchell, Mattias Ohlund and Sami Salo has held up thus far. Salo is back after missing 15 games and Bieksa missed some time in October and November, but Vancouver's go-to D-men have been refreshingly healthy this season. And the third pairing of Alexander Edler and Shane O'Brien has been effective; the 22-year-old Edler had 18 points in 46 games — and a blueline-best 88 shots — while the abrasive O'Brien led the league with 130 penalty minutes. Even deep, deep depth defenders Rob Davison (five fights in 19 games) and Lawrence Nycholat (plus-3 in 14 games) have added something to the mix when they snuck into the lineup.

But there's no denying the Canucks need those top three storylines to start trending in the other direction if they want to make the playoffs. And really, a complete reversal is a reasonable expectation.

First of all, Roberto Luongo returned to his rightful place in the Canucks crease just prior to the break. It was a rocky comeback as he lost three consecutive games, but surely the all-star weekend in Montreal will remind Luongo of his greatness in goal.

The Canucks begin and end with their all-world netminder; it's a basic assumption that Luongo will return to form and lead Vancouver into the post-season. If he sustains another injury or inexplicably goes cold … all bets are off.

While the arrival of Mats Sundin didn't provide the spark the team hoped it would, the long-term outlook is positive. Only a handful of players in the league have Sundin's combination of skill, leadership and veteran savvy.

At some point, probably sooner than later, he'll get in synch with his linemates and rip off 15 or 20 points in an eight- or 10-game stretch. Like Luongo, Sundin is too good to struggle for too long.

And, assuming Luongo and Sundin return to their usual elite status, the third storyline — long losing streaks — is something the Canucks won't have to worry about.

For more sports coverage, visit us online at metronews.ca/sports.

Estalella to testify against Bonds

MLB Former San Francisco Giants catcher Bobby Estalella has been subpoenaed by federal prosecutors to testify at Barry Bonds' trial, ESPN.com reported Thursday. Estalella, who was on the San Francisco Giants with Bonds in 2000 and 2001, is expected to testify to first-hand knowledge that Bonds used steroids, the website said, citing an unidentified source with knowledge of the evidence.

Serena, Federer advance to finals

TENNIS Roger Federer moved one win away from a record-equalling 14th grand slam title on Thursday, blasting Andy Roddick off court as Melbourne sweltered through a once-in-a-century heatwave. Federer notched his 16th victory over the American 6-2, 7-5, 7-5 to reach his 18th grand slam final and fourth one at the Australian Open. Earlier, Serena Williams also reached her fourth Australian Open final, slamming the brakes on Elena Dementieva's 15-match winning streak.

Canada going big at Worlds

SKIING Twenty-one Canadian skiers, including 11 Olympians and seven World Cup winners, will compete at the upcoming alpine world championships in Val d'Isere, France. The Canadian team is double the size of the last squad who represented Canada at the world championships in 2007 in Sweden, where Calgary's Jan Hudec was the lone Canadian medallist. Among the athletes who met the qualifying standards set by FIS, alpine skiing's governing body, are World Cup winners Hudec, Emily Brydon of Fernie, B.C., Erik Guay of Mont-Tremblant, Que., Britt Janyk of Whistler, B.C., John Kucera of Calgary, Thomas Grandi of Canmore, Alta., and Genevieve Simard of Val-Morin, Que.

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Safe skies
The North American Aerospace Defence Command said Thursday it will enforce flight restrictions over the Tampa during Sunday's game between the Pittsburgh Steelers and the Arizona Cardinals. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Super Bowl XLIII

Prop it up this Super Sunday

NFL's biggest game gives gamblers a wide variety of betting options

YorkReport

Marty York
marty.york@metronews.ca

At some point in the past decade or so, merely wagering on the outcomes of Super Bowl games themselves became insufficient and unsatisfactory for the general public — and so bookmakers introduced what we commonly refer to these days as prop bets.

The bookies — whether from Las Vegas, your local neighbourhood, online gambling services or even your favourite government lottery — began to lure extra revenue by giving bettors opportunities to lay down sheckels on props such as the number of passes a quarterback would complete in the Super Bowl or how many tackles a linebacker would record.

These were relatively sensible, understandable game-related matters.

Somewhere along the way, however, bookies decided it was prudent to appease degenerates who needed action on virtually anything and everything on Super Bowl Sundays, like the coin toss (heads or tails) or whether a specified kicker would score more points than a specified forward playing in an NHL match at the same time.

Well, prop bets have reached a new high (low?) for this Sunday's Super Bowl between the Pittsburgh Steelers and Arizona Cardinals. Consider these two props being offered by a handful of books:

A) An over/under (3.5) on how many times the television broadcast will cut to shots of Brenda Warner, wife of Cards QB Kurt Warner.

B) An over/under (nine) on how many times the broadcasters will refer to Pittsburgh quarterback Ben Roethlisberger as Big Ben.

Weird, eh? Just think: Folks involved in the broadcast (directors in the case of the Warner prop and announcers in the case of the Roethlisberger one) have complete control over these developments. What's to prevent them from advising their relatives to bet all they can on the overs, and then ensure they cut to Brenda four times or mention Big Ben 10 times?

And if you doubt this can happen, consider this: A recent survey revealed nobody is less trusted in this world than media types.

• Flakiest players in Sunday's game: The kickers, hands down. Or, should I say, feet down?

"I don't know why," Steelers kicker Jeff Reed divulged, "but I bend down to change the sock on my kicking foot at the start of each quarter."

Cards kicker Neil Rackers, meanwhile, always eats pre-game meals consisting of spaghetti and precisely three meatballs, which to him represents the number of points he aims to produce on each of his field-goal attempts.

• Sunday may well be the final Arizona appearances for three key offensive players.

Warner, receiver Anquan Boldin and running back Edgerrin James will all be eligible for free agency.

James produced respectably near the end of this season but mostly flopped with the Cards, who'll likely pursue a younger, cheaper back. Boldin has said he won't re-sign because, in his view, management lied to him by not following through on a promise to grant him a new contract before the season. Warner thinks the Cards owe him $500,000 US from a 2007 incentive and he won't re-sign unless that's factored into a new deal.

All three would attract considerable attention on the free-agent market.

Marty York has been a groundbreaking sports columnist and broadcaster in Canada for decades.

GETTY IMAGES

Kurt Warner's wife Brenda, right, became a media attraction when he played for the Rams. You, too, can bet on how many times she's shown on TV Sunday.

Berger's finale?

• Sunday's Super Bowl could be Mitch Berger's NFL swan song. The Steelers' punter, 36, is a B.C. native and has an off-season home in Arizona.

Cardinals' James relaxed for his first Super Bowl

NFL After nearly 3,000 rushing attempts during a punishing 10-year NFL career, Edgerrin James feels he has earned the right to enjoy his first trip to the Super Bowl.

The normally low-key Arizona Cardinals running back turned heads when he arrived for Super Bowl week in a Lamborghini. He has been relaxed, jovial with the media, and smiling all week.

James insists he will carry his laid-back attitude into sold-out Raymond James Stadium on Sunday when the Cardinals face the favored Pittsburgh Steelers in the NFL's title game.

"There's no way I would be nervous," he told reporters Thursday. "It's football. They go left, I go right."

James, 30, is enjoying his week in South Florida, where the NFL veteran and four-time Pro Bowler grew up and played college ball at the University of Miami.

But halfway into Arizona's storybook season, James, one of the league's best running backs of all time, was angered at getting benched in favour of rookie Tim Hightower.

"You want to play," explained James. "This year, I worked extremely hard in the off-season and I had a chance to pass up some of the greatest players of all-time.

"You want to build on the previous year, and the previous year I had 1,200 yards. In training camp we were doing certain things that looked like it was going to be promising.

"And then we were going in a different direction."

When Hightower entered the starting lineup, he had some big games, moving James further down the bench. But his production slowed late in the season, giving James another shot.

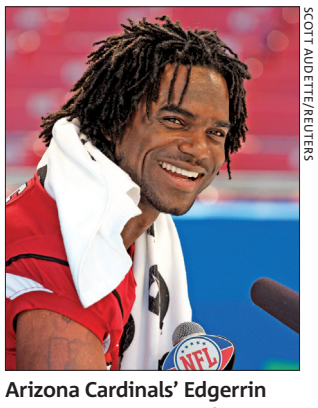
James made the most of his opportunity, rushing for 100 yards in the regular-season finale against Seattle. During the Cards' unexpected post-season surge, James has rushed for 203 yards while helping the Cards reach their first Super Bowl.

The fourth overall selection in the 1999 draft is thrilled to be in the Super Bowl, especially since Indianapolis won the title in 2006, the year left the Colts for Arizona.

"For 10 years I've been playing and to finally get here, it's big," said James, who rushed for a career-low 514 yards this season.

"You've tried to put yourself in a position to be in games like this, and it didn't happen."

REUTERS



SCOTT AUDETTE/REUTERS

Arizona Cardinals' Edgerrin James is enjoying his first Super Bowl in his 10-year career.

SUPER BOWL XLIII

Sunday

Steelers VS

- **Raymond James Stadium, Tampa, Fla.**
- **3 p.m., CTV, NBC**
- **Line: Steelers -7**
- **Announcers: Al Michaels/John Madden (NBC)**
- **U.S. national anthem: Jennifer Hudson**
- **Halftime show: Bruce Springsteen**

Heading out?
Where to watch the game

- **Kingston Taphouse and Grille.** Tickets are $20 and include a burger and Granville Island beer. 755 Richards St. 11 a.m. — 10 p.m. Info: kingstontaphouse.com.
- **The Score Restaurant.** Tailgate party and barbecue. 1262 Davie St. 12 p.m. – 12 a.m. Info: 604-632-1646.
- **Library Square Pub.** Super Bowl Party and pig roast. 300 West Georgia St. 3 p.m. — 6 p.m. Info: librarysquare.ca.
- **Darby's Pub.** Drink deals and special Super Bowl menu. 2001 MacDonald St. 3 p.m. — 8 p.m. Info: darbyspub.ca.
- **Lamplighter Pub.** Super Bowl party and flat screen TV giveaway. 92 Water St. 3 p.m. — 6 p.m. Info: 604-687-4424.

Our Super blogger

For all things Super Bowl, check out Laurence Heinen's blog all weekend at metronews.ca/blogs

Sports in brief

TICKETS Miss America has been unable to get a ticket to Sunday's Super Bowl after becoming the first woman from the state of Indiana to claim the honour last weekend. Katie Stam has been invited to Tampa to take part in a charity event on Saturday. "We have no tickets, I love football and I'd love to go to the game," Stam told Reuters.

REUTERS

Ring-leader pleads not guilty

A Massachusetts man accused of being behind a jewelry heist involving stolen New York Giants Super Bowl rings was ordered held on $3-million US cash bail Thursday. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Super Bowl XLIII

The top 10 Super Bowls of all time

JOHN CHICK
john.chick@metronews.ca

Clockwise from top left: Buffalo Bills kicker Scott Norwood missed a potential game-winning field-goal attempt in Super Bowl XXV in 1991. Tennessee Titans receiver Kevin Dyson tries in vain to reach the endzone in Super Bowl XXXIV in 2000. The infamous "wardrobe malfunction" in Super Bowl XXXVIII in 2004.

XXV
Jan. 27, 1991
Giants 20, Bills 19

Set against the backdrop of the first Gulf War, the high-powered no-huddle Buffalo Bills offence entered Super Bowl XXV having scored 95 points in two playoff games, and were 10-point favourites over the ball-control, grind-it-out New York Giants. In the only Super Bowl where neither team turned the ball over once, the Parcells-Belichick Giants defence held Buffalo's K-Gun offence in check and ate up the clock to the tune of 40:33 in time of possession.

Thurman Thomas's dramatic 31-yard touchdown run on the first play of the fourth quarter gave the Bills a two-point lead, but after a 10-minute New York drive ended in a Matt Bahr field goal, the Bills desperately drove back downfield, setting up a Scott Norwood 47-yard game-winning field goal. Norwood missed wide right, with seven seconds on the clock.

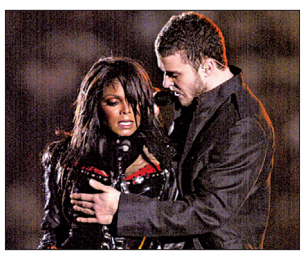
XLII
Feb. 3, 2008
Giants 17, Patriots 14

The New England Patriots arrived in Arizona for Super Bowl XLII 18-0, only the second undefeated regular-season team in NFL history. But the wild-card New York Giants came in riding a wave of momentum, and by the second quarter of the game it was clear that New York wasn't going to let the Patriots high-powered offence roll through them. New England had a season-low seven points at halftime, leading only by four. In the fourth quarter, the Pats appeared to take control when Tom Brady hooked up with Randy Moss on a six-yard touchdown pass, but on the ensuing Giants drive Eli Manning escaped a sack and found David Tyree on 3rd and 5 with a near-miracle 32-yard first-down completion with 1:15 left to set up the game-winning score.

Giants receiver David Tyree makes a remarkable grab to help lead New York over the New England Patriots in Super Bowl XLII in 2008.

XXXVIII
Feb. 1, 2004
Patriots 32, Panthers 29

In a game better known for Justin Timberlake's cheap feel on Janet Jackson, spun by the machine into a "wardrobe malfunction," the Patriots again found themselves involved in one of the greatest Super Bowls ever, this time against the Carolina Panthers. After an uneventful 45 minutes, the two teams combined for 868 total yards, and for 45 points in the fourth quarter alone. Carolina held a one-point lead with under seven minutes left, but after trading touchdowns in the last three minutes, a penalty on the Panthers kickoff would set up Adam Vinatieri's second last minute Super Bowl-winning field goal in three years.



XXXVI
Feb. 3, 2002
Patriots 20, Rams 17

The first big game post 9-11 pitted the Patriots against the heavily favoured St. Louis Rams and their "Greatest Show on Turf" offence. The plucky Pats and fledgling QB Tom Brady opened up a shocking 14-3 lead at halftime before Kurt Warner and the Rams offence responded in the fourth quarter, tying the game at 17 with 1:30 left in the game.

The Brady legend planted its seeds in the next minute and 23 seconds as he led New England downfield, which was pivotal in setting up Adam Vinatieri's game-winning 48-yard field goal.

XXXIV
Jan. 30, 2000
Rams 23, Titans 16

The first Super Bowl of the new millennium was as boring as they come for most of the game, with the St. Louis Rams leading Tennessee 16-0 midway through the third. But after the Titans scored 16 unanswered points, St. Louis got it's record-setting offence going, with Kurt Warner throwing a 73-yard TD strike to Isaac Bruce with under seven minutes left. Scrambling to tie the game, Steve McNair and the Titans moved the ball downfield, and with six seconds left and no timeouts, McNair hit Kevin Dyson on a slant pass inside the Rams' 3. However, St. Louis linebacker Mike Jones immediately tackled him at the one-yard line as time expired.

97.5
• Million U.S. TV viewers who watched last year's Super Bowl, an all-time high.

XXXII
Jan. 25, 1998
Broncos 31, Packers 24

The Denver Broncos came into Super Bowl XXXII against the Green Bay Packers winless in four big-game visits. John Elway had been at the helm for three of them, losing by a combined score of 136-40. With this game tied at 17 in the third quarter, Elway took off on a third-down scramble, leaping for a first down as two Packer defenders hit him, helicoptering the 37-year old through the air. The play became the defining moment of Elway's career.

With the game tied again at 24-24 with 1:45 left in the game, Terrell Davis ran the ball in for his third touchdown of the day, as the Broncos finally took home a Lombardi trophy to the Rockies.

XXIII
Jan. 22, 1989
49ers 20, Bengals 16

Tied 6-6 in the third quarter, Cincinnati's Stanford Jennings returned a San Francisco kickoff for an electrifying 93-yard touchdown return. Joe Montana and Jerry Rice went to work, tying the game early in the fourth before a Bengals field goal put Cincinnati back in front 16-13. The greatest clutch player in professional football history took control with 3:10 remaining, as Montana drove the Niners 92 yards in 11 plays. In a huddle at the Cincinnati 10, Montana said to tackle Harris Barton, "Look, there's John Candy," pointing out the Canadian comic in the stands. Montana then promptly won the Super Bowl, hitting John Taylor for the game-winning score with 34 seconds remaining.

XIII
Jan. 21, 1979
Steelers 35, Cowboys 31

In the third quarter, Dallas' Hall of Fame tight end Jackie Smith dropped a short, wide open touchdown pass in the end zone. Franco Harris, Terry Bradshaw and Lynn Swann put the Steelers ahead 35-17 in the fourth, but Dallas didn't go quietly into the night. The Cowboys scored two touchdowns in the last three minutes, but Pittsburgh recovered an onside kick with 17 seconds left to seal the Steelers victory.

XXXIX
Feb. 7, 2005
Patriots 24, Eagles 21

The last of the Patriots three Super Bowl wins this decade, Tom Brady and company found themselves tied with the Philadelphia Eagles going into the fourth quarter. But after scoring a touchdown and kicking a field goal for a 10-point lead in the fourth quarter, Donovan McNabb, Terrell Owens and the Eagles offence moved 79 yards in 13 plays to score and cut the lead to three inside two minutes. Rodney Harrison sealed New England's win when he picked off McNabb with 40 seconds left.

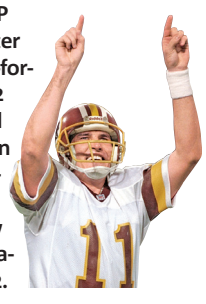
XXXI
Jan. 26, 1997
Packers 35, Patriots 21

The Mike Holmgren-Brett Favre Packers faced off against the Bill Parcells-Drew Bledsoe Patriots. After a high-scoring back-and-forth first half, New England cut the lead to six in the third quarter on a Curtis Martin TD scamper. On the ensuing kickoff however, former Heisman winner Desmond Howard ran the kick back 99 yards to put the game away for Green Bay.

The Super Bowl's Canadian content over the years

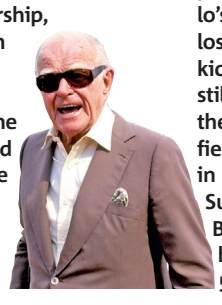
Mark Rypien

Born in Calgary and raised in Spokane, Wash., Rypien became the only Canadian-born player to win a Super Bowl MVP award after going 18-for-33 for 292 yards and two TDs in Washington's 37-24 victory over Buffalo in 1992.



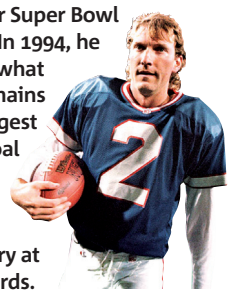
Jack Kent Cooke

The Toronto businessman became a U.S. citizen by an act of Congress in 1960 and bought the Washington Redskins. Under his ownership, the Skins won three Super Bowl titles in four tries – one quarterbacked by Rypien, the other by former CFL star Joe Theismann.



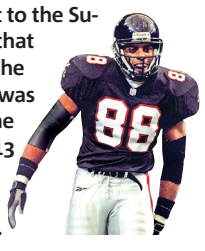
Steve Christie

The soccer-player-turned-kicker from suburban Toronto joined the Bills in 1992, and played in two of Buffalo's four Super Bowl losses. In 1994, he kicked what still remains the longest field goal in Super Bowl history at 54 yards.



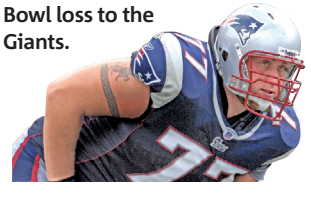
O.J. Santiago

The product of Toronto sports power St. Mike's entered NFL lore in 1998 when he invented the "Dirty Bird" a fairly ugly dance routine performed after Atlanta touchdowns. The Falcons went to the Super Bowl that year, but the tight end was held to one catch for 13 yards in a 34-19 loss to Denver.



Nick Kaczur

The big tackle from Wayne Gretzky's hometown of Brantford, Ont., joined the Patriots in 2005 and became part of the vaunted offensive line in front of Tom Brady. He started at right tackle for New England in last year's Super Bowl loss to the Giants.



This year's CanCon

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Steelers punter Mitch Berger of Kamloops, B.C.

Visit metronews.ca/movies to get showtimes, watch trailers and read reviews.

Movies&Entertainment

EDITOR: DEAN LISK, DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Movies

Love's leading lady Pg 18

Renee Zellweger plays an ambitious executive who temporarily relocates to wintery New Ulm, Minn., in New in Town, the latest romantic comedy outing for this female-favourite actress.

movies Pg 19

Preview of Star Trek shows sexier, edgier new vision.

music Pg 24

Franz Ferdinand explain the new techno/disco sound.

entertainment Pg 26

So You Think You Can Dance waltzes into town.

Dylan, Joplin on Watchmen soundtrack

The soundtrack for the film Watchmen will feature new music from My Chemical Romance along with Billie Holiday, Janis Joplin, Bob Dylan and others. It will hit store shelves on March 3. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Movies

A CLASSIC; EXCELLENT; GOOD; FAIR; POOR

Nothing new in this Town

New In Town

Director: Jonas Elmer
Stars: Renée Zellweger, Harry Connick Jr.
Classification: PG
Rating: ½

On the web

- For a New In Town trailer and screen times, visit metronews.ca/movies.

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

Maybe it's solely because she's so connected to the role of Bridget Jones, but Renée Zellweger has become one of those elusive actresses that women love and men are completely indifferent about. You know, like Meg Ryan.

It's not that Zellweger is unattractive or that she can't act, but in her romantic comedy New In Town, she's definitely struggling to breathe life into a rather repeated premise and some pretty drowsy dialogue.

Zellweger plays an ambitious executive who temporarily relocates to New Ulm, Minn., in order to advance her career by overseeing the shutdown of a manufacturing plant.

There, she meets an array of faceless factory workers, tapioca-obsessed rubes and the plant's ruggedly handsome, but overly serious union boss (Harry Connick Jr.) who is determined to ensure workers don't lose their job. Can you guess whom she reluctantly takes an interest in?

The set-up, of course, is sound enough for a rom-com. You might even expect a myriad of delightful disagreements between the two opposing would-be lovers.

Harry Connick Jr. and Renée Zellweger star in New In Town.

But you would be wrong. Instead, New In Town overlooks the first rule of the rom-com: The two leads must hate each other unequivocally. Here, the pair's aversion turns to adoration with disappointing, unfunny and anticlimactic haste.

That said, at least Danish director Jonas Elmer knew his audience well enough to cast not only female fave Zellweger, but also Connick Jr.

However, while the pair may make this rom-com tolerable to some female filmgoers, New In Town will have most people breathlessly counting down the seconds to departure.

Lights, camera ... lock lips

InFocus

Richard Crouse
mrchaos33@hotmail.com

More than any other film genre romantic comedy suffers from a bad case of predictability. How many times have we seen two unlikely people beat the odds to become a happy couple by the time the credits roll? Dorky Harry meets beautiful Sally. Pretty Woman of the Night seduced by suave rich guy.

It's déjà vu all over again.

The trick to making a good rom-com is to make the journey — how the characters wind up locking lips at the film's end — interesting.

New In Town, the latest from Renée Zellweger does this by moving the action out of New York, where all great romantic comedies are set, to Minnesota.

This location twist is often used in the most common type of romantic comedy, the trademarked Drew Barrymore rom-com. On film Drew has fallen in love in Hawaii (50 First Dates), Boston (Fever Pitch) and everywhere in between.

"Deep down we all love a happy ending and while real-life relationships might not always work, it's assured that when Harry meets Sally, it will be forever."

The breakdown for a Barrymore romance is simple. Act One sees the quirky couple meet. Sparks fly. Act Two has the pair falling in love under unlikely circumstances. Things go great until a confrontation leads to separation. Act Three contains the Grand Gesture. He or she, depending on the movie, moves heaven and Earth to win the other back. Insert happy ending.

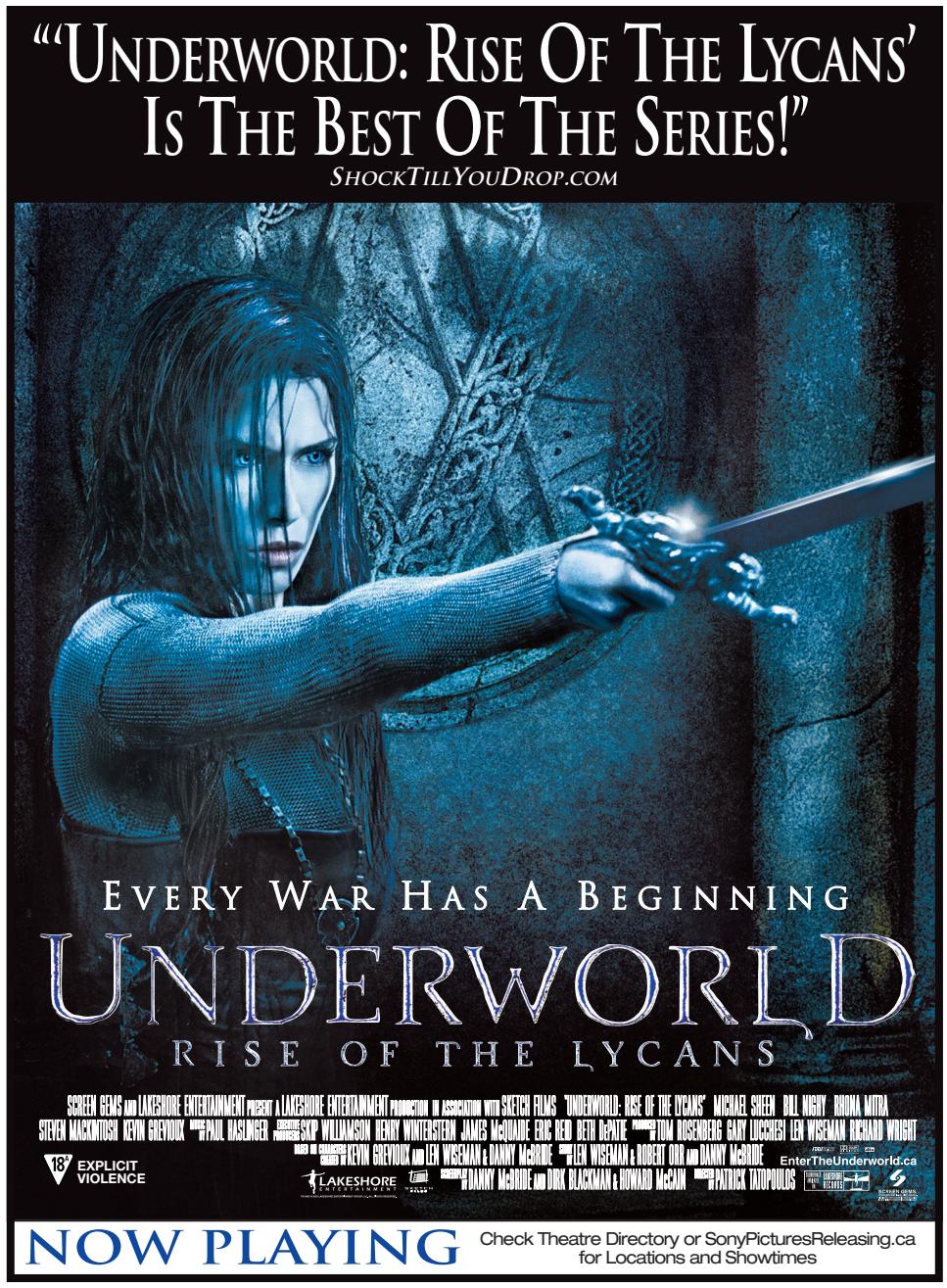
Barrymore, of course, isn't to blame for the state of rom-coms. Neither is Kate or Reese. They're just mimicking an age-old formula.

Trouble in Paradise, an Ernst Lubitsch classic from 1932, follows the structure and it could be argued that Shakespeare was the architect of the rom-com.

So why, after half a millennium, do romantic comedies still thrill audiences? I think it's primal. Deep down we all love a happy ending and while real-life relationships might not always work, it's assured that when Harry meets Sally, it will be forever.

That kind of certainty, no matter how unreal, keeps us coming back for more.

Richard Crouse is the author of Son of the 100 Best Movies You've Never Seen and film critic for CTV's Canada AM.



Green Hornet still on: Rogen
Seth Rogen has denied The Green Hornet movie has been cancelled. The actor — who is set to play the titular superhero — has quashed claims Sony has dropped the project after director Kevin Smith pulled out. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Movies

A CLASSIC; EXCELLENT; GOOD; FAIR; POOR

New take on Trek

Sexier approach in franchise reboot

PHIL BROWN
for Metro Canada

Movie **feature**

Paramount came to Toronto with roughly 30 minutes of completed footage from its summer blockbuster reboot of Star Trek last week. The preview reel opened with an intro from director J.J. Abrams (the absurdly rich creator of Alias and Lost) who openly admitted to not being a huge fan of the series.

The news isn't great for the obsessive Trekkies whose encyclopedic knowledge of the franchise can be terrifyingly thorough and purist, but it won't necessarily be a problem for the moviegoing public at large.

From the footage screened, it seems that rather than creating a geek-centric origin story that all the diehard fans have already written in the heads, Abrams is attempting a Casino Royale-style franchise reboot that will stay true to the established universe while also reinventing and expanding the possibilities of the series for more demanding contemporary audiences.

The sneak peek showed an updated Kirk with a far more developed sense of bad-assery than camp icon William Shatner ever brought to the role. This Kirk is a more active, arrogant, and ambitious character, unafraid to get his hands bloody.

This change in character seems to be representative of the new take on the franchise as a whole, which combines kinetic action storytelling with the classic Star Trek logic-driven allegorical sci-fi.

"Whether or not that will come at the expense of alienating some members of the world's most devoted fanbase remains to be seen, but at least it looks like this probably won't be another Phantom Menace debacle."

That said, there is still a concern that this younger, faster, sexier approach will breed a Dawson Creek In Space reboot that will lack the intellectual depth that has defined the series to this point.

While some of the actors do look like they were cast for their pretty headshots rather than acting abilities, the footage did showcase some eccentric character work from Simon Pegg that suggests some deeper three-dimensional characterizations this time around.

We won't know if Abrams' experiment works until the May release, but one thing is for sure: The scale and action of this film will be on a whole other level than previous Trek outings.

Abrams has come a long way since the limited but impressive action set pieces on Alias and based on the early footage, the action in his Star Trek alone will create new fans.

Whether or not that will come at the expense of alienating some members of the world's most devoted fanbase remains to be seen, but at least it looks like this probably won't be another Phantom Menace debacle.

A scene from the upcoming Star Trek. The J.J. Abrams-directed film aims to draw in more fans by adding a more contemporary approach to the franchise's origin story.

Oscar ballots mailed out

AWARDS Will the Oscar go to Button or Milk, or will Slumdog be top dog next month?

Final Oscar ballots were mailed to some 5,800 members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, who will cast their votes for the best 2008 movie, actor, actress, director and 20 other categories, organizers said.

The ballots — still on paper despite the dominance of e-mail and text messaging — are due back on Feb. 17, just ahead of the Feb. 22 Oscar ceremony in Hollywood where the movie industry's highest honours are handed out.

The 81st Annual Academy Awards

They will be tabulated by accounting firm PricewaterhouseCoopers, which has never seen a breach of security concerning the winners in its 75 years of handling the Oscar ballots.

REUTERS

Also opening
Also hitting theatres this weekend in The Uninvited. For a review of the film, visit metronews.ca/movies this weekend. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Movies

A CLASSIC; EXCELLENT; GOOD; FAIR; POOR

Psychic sci-fi propels Push

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

When Push hits theatres next Friday, it won't just be the latest science fiction thriller to hit the multiplexes; it will be a small glimpse into a shadowy world that conspiricists have professed to be true for decades.

To most, the notion that someone being able to psychically "push" thoughts and emotions into somebody else's mind may be far-fetched, but to others — like director Paul McGuigan, it may not be so preposterous.

"I was on the Internet looking at remote viewing, for instance," said the director during a recent phone interview.

"Remote viewing (is a notion that) you can have special powers that enable you to be outside a room, (but) you can tell what's inside the room.

"That's kind of crazy but there are people who are experts at this that have been used by government agencies for years and years."

Push is definitely not shying away from that concept either. Featuring a wide array of abilities, this thriller focuses on a group of gifted young psychics on the run from a seedy government agency that's trying to wrangle them for experimental purposes. Although the premise of gifted clairvoyants and psychic bloodhounds are fascinating enough, McGuigan didn't get too wrapped up in the conspiracy.

"I always just thought of this as a sci-fi thriller — sort of a film noir in the sci-fi world and I kept it very much grounded there."

Perhaps the film's most intriguing character is 13-year-old Cassie Holmes, a "watcher" who has the ability to self-induce visions of the future. Played by Dakota Fanning (Charlotte's Web), Push also marks a noticeably darker shift in the talented child star's acting career.

"She basically reads (a script) and decides how she wants to play it," said McGuigan about his impressive leading lady. The director

Movie **feature**

behind acclaimed films like Wicker Park and Lucky Number Slevin has even recently called Fanning the "best actor he's ever worked with."

"It's the poise; it's just knowing that life is not that complicated. We kind of gather the complications of life as we get older and she really hasn't done that," said McGuigan. "I can't imagine what she's going to be like in 10 years time."

Dakota Fanning, centre, on the set of Push. The young actor plays a teen who has the ability to self-induce visions of the future in the upcoming sci-fi thriller.

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Liam Neeson owns Taken

Taken
Director: Pierre Morel
Stars: Liam Neeson
Classification: 14A
Rating: ½

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

REVIEW A frenetic cross between the Bourne trilogy and Steven Soderbergh's underappreciated revenge flick The Limey, Taken is a bright light after a month full of mediocrity.

Directed by Pierre Morel (District 13) from a Luc Besson (The Transporter) script, Liam Neeson stars as Bryan Mills, a retired CIA agent who wants nothing more than to make up for lost time with his 17-year-old daughter Kim (played by Maggie Grace).

Now spoiled by her snotty mother and rich step-dad, Kim is leaving for Paris against Brian's overly concerned wishes.

As it turns out, he's right. Although it takes nearly a third of the film to get there, Kim and a friend arrive in Paris only to be carted off by Albanian sex traffickers while she's on the phone with daddy. This is where Taken kicks into overdrive.

Neeson is near perfect as the vengeful father who's not afraid to get blood on his hands. With unspoken ease, he exhibits a commanding presence and a surprising prowess with the punches — especially given that he's now in his 50s.

Taken should have no problem selling seats with its stunning fight choreography, compelling high-speed chases and guiltless attempts to please fans of the genre, but, in the end, Neeson's performance is the real reason Taken is worth taking in.

Ballast opens window into ordinary struggles

Ballast
Director: Lance Hammer
Stars: Michael J. Smith Sr., Tarra Riggs
Classification: 14A
Rating: ½

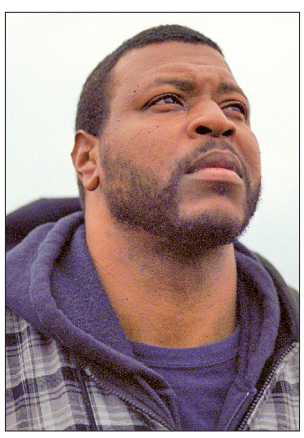
ROBYN YOUNG
for Metro Canada

Ballast, by first-time writer and director Lance Hammer, has already earned critical acclaim with two awards at the Sundance Film Festival and four nominations for the Gotham Independent Film Awards including breakthrough director and best picture.

But even with that pedigree, it requires some patience to sit through this piece about three people whose lives are hastily thrown together in the wake of a suicide.

The film opens a window into the ordinary struggles of a single mother and lonely middle-aged man as they put aside their differences simply to get by.

In the opening scene, Lawrence (Michael J. Smith Sr.) is wrapped in a blanket and staring vacantly at the television in his Mississippi Delta home. A neighbour arrives to find his twin brother Darius dead from a drug overdose in the next room and Lawrence in a zombie-like state.



Michael J. Smith stars as Lawrence in the film Ballast.

Depressed, alone and trying to deal with the loss of his twin, Lawrence is confronted with a new challenge when his brother's estranged wife Marlee (Tarra Riggs) and her 12-year-old son James (Jim-Myron Ross) re-enter his life.

Young James, damaged by his father's early abandonment, is on the precipice of involvement with drugs and gangs when Marlee, who works hard scrubbing toilets to earn a meagre living, moves herself and James away from their troubles and into the house left to her in a scribbled suicide note from Darius.

The house stands on the same property as Lawrence's, and Marlee's first intention is to sell it out from under him, but as the days pass, the two begin to realize they're better off together than apart.

Ballast is a slow-moving portrait of the grim realities of poverty and disadvantage in southern Mississippi and all three main actors, new to the big screen, serve up performances that are far from amateur.

Hammer's no-frills production — with an absence of musical score and lack of dialogue — punctuates the hopelessness of these three troubled souls. Although the film doesn't end wrapped-up-with-a-bow-on-top, it does offer a sense of hope and a light at the end of the tunnel.

Hammer's debut film still highlights the ability of the human heart to forgive and forget, to move forward and survive.

Radcliffe stunt double injured on Harry Potter set
Daniel Radcliffe's stunt double has reportedly been hospitalized after an explosion on the Harry Potter set. The unnamed 25-year-old suffered horrific injuries after a flying sequence using a harness went wrong. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Movies

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●●○ EXCELLENT; ●●●○○ GOOD; ●●○○○ FAIR; ●○○○○ POOR

In a Class of its own

The **Class**

Director: Laurent Cantet
Stars: Francois Begaudeau
Classification: STC
Rating: ●●●●○

KEVIN COURRIER
for Metro Canada

Most movies about idealistic teachers who inspire their charges, whether they're sappy (To Sir, With Love, Dead Poet's Society), brutal (Lean On Me), or decent (Freedom Writers), still become painfully predictable.

Francois Begaudeau portrays an inspired teacher in The Class.

They're rarely about real education and more about learning life lessons. People don't learn; they get ennobled. The Class is that rare exception, a riveting picture that examines the complex dynamic that develops between an inspired teacher and a motley group of students.

The Class, based on a book by Francois Begaudeau, deals with a teacher in a multi-ethnic neighborhood in Paris, who attempts to teach a diverse group of students from various social classes and cultures. Director Laurent Cantet (Time Out, Heading South) loosely adapts the material into an entertaining, yet incisive, look at how the process of learning can be predicated by certain social and political realities. For instance, Wei, a Chinese teen, is one of his best students. But his learning is affected by his self-effacing shyness and the tumult brought on by his mother (an illegal alien) facing deportation. Soulaymane (Franck Keita), from Mali, is a troubled and failing student who faces both expulsion and a father prepared to send him back to Africa.

Working with a group of unprofessional actors playing the students, plus Begaudeau portraying a version of himself, Cantet grapples with pertinent issues that grow out of classroom discussions — including everything from The Diary of Anne Frank to arguments about rival football teams.

While The Class doesn't idealize the students, it doesn't deify Francois either. When he attempts to confront the bad behaviour of two girls who are class representatives, he uses an insulting pejorative that has the opposite impact of what he intends.

In The Class, Cantet shows a probing intelligence that doesn't settle for easy answers, or pose obvious resolutions. Put simply, Francois and his students don't all reach a common end. The Class is clearly in a class of its own.

Canadian wants crack at Thor's hammer

CHRIS ALEXANDER
for Metro Canada

FEATURE Forget Brad Pitt. Veto Viggo Mortensen. When it comes to who deserves the coveted role of beloved Marvel Comics icon The Mighty Thor, those pampered Hollywood fancy lads barely bang the hammer.

There is one man who thinks he is truly fit to wear the tights of the pulpified Norse God of Thunder — Canadian actor James Preston Rogers.

Standing over six-foot-five with tree trunk biceps and long blond hair, Rogers (a former bouncer and WWE wrestler) wound his way into a life before the lens three years ago.

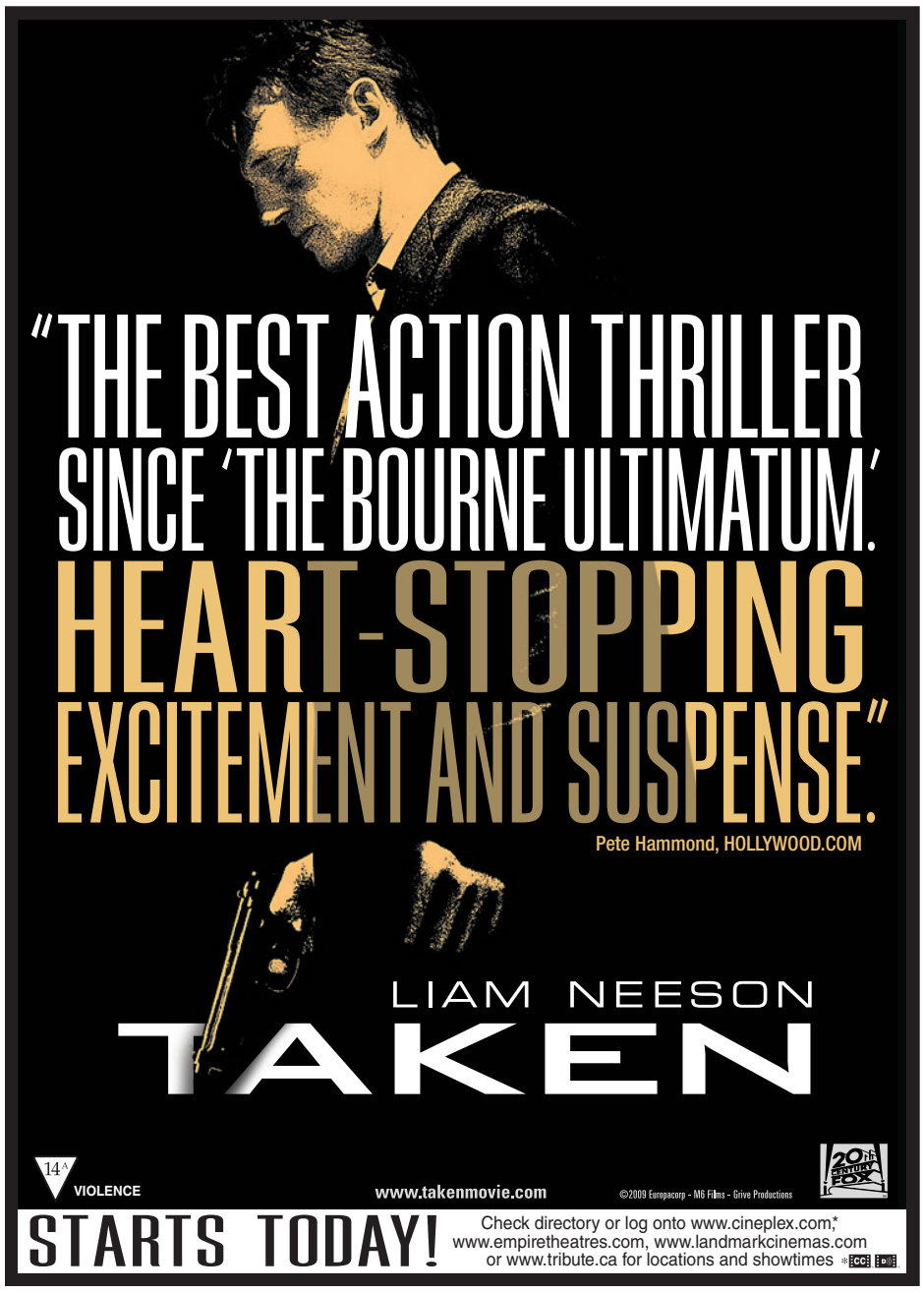
Since then he has been slowly making a name for himself in many high-profile pictures including a part in the vikings vs. aliens cross-genre meltdown Outlander.

But it's his very public campaign to assume the role of Thor in director Kenneth Branagh's upcoming — and uncast — adaptation that has seen him winning the hearts of counter-culture fans worldwide.

"Every day, this thing gathers more steam," Rogers said last week during a meet and greet at the Toronto Film College. "I just keep getting tons of e-mails, calls and media support. It's been pretty surreal."

When plans to launch a big screen version of the celebrated comic surfaced late last year, Rogers hit the Internet, directing fans to his IMDb page and starting a petition to plead with the powers that be at Marvel to cast him as Thor.

"For years people have said I look like Thor," says the physically intimidating, but soft-spoken, actor. "I saw this as my chance to show people what I can do."



Scott brothers to produce A-Team film

Ridley and Tony Scott are set to produce a big screen version of The A-Team. The Gladiator filmmaker has signed up as producer of the project while his brother Tony will executive produce. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Reel Time

A CLASSIC; EXCELLENT; GOOD; FAIR; POOR

In defence of Slumdog

The makers of Slumdog Millionaire have defended their treatment of child actors taken from the slums of Mumbai where the rags-to-riches tale, nominated for 10 Oscars, is set.

In recent weeks the movie's success around the world has been overshadowed by objections in India to the name, which some slum dwellers find offensive, its depiction of the lives of impoverished Indians and the treatment of the cast.

Earlier this week Britain's Daily Telegraph quoted the parents of Rubina Ali and Azharuddin Ismail, who play slum kids Latika and Salim respectively, complaining that their children had not been cared for properly by the movie's makers.

Ismail's father told the newspaper that there was no money left and that he knows nothing of a promised trust fund set up for his son. Ali's father is quoted as saying "the money they paid us is nothing. They should pay more."

The report said Ali received 500 pounds for filming and Ismail 1,700 pounds.

Slumdog producer Christian Colson said figures quoted in the British press were inaccurate.

"They were well paid for the work that they did," he told Reuters in Los Angeles, when asked about the reports.

A scene form Slumdog Millionaire. Despite the universal acclaim the Danny Boyle-directed film is receiving, some have objected to its depiction of the lives of impoverished Indians and the treatment of the cast.

"The figures quoted in the U.K. press are inaccurate. The suggestion that they (the children) worked for a year is also inaccurate.

"Immediately after we cast the kids, we put in place a plan of action for their future welfare, over and above the money we paid them; we did that in consultation with their parents."

He said the producers enrolled them in school for the first time in their lives and set up a fund to pay for the cost of their education, medical emergencies and "basic living costs."

Danny Boyle, the film's British director, added: "What you've got to do is somehow try and get a plan that isn't about the absolute immediate, it's about the long-term benefit for the kids.

"If we can give them something back, that will benefit them throughout their lives, that's what you want to achieve." Boyle also addressed objections to the film's name.

Nicholas Almeida, a social activist and slum dweller, has filed a complaint in a local Indian court against Boyle and Colson, saying the film's title was damaging and discriminating.

"When the British ruled India, they called Indians 'dogs.' Why do we want to call these poor children 'dogs' 60 years after we got independence?" he told Reuters earlier this week.

"Immediately after we cast the kids, we put in place a plan of action for their future welfare, over and above the money we paid them."
Producer
Christian Colson

Also this week protesters, mainly slum dwellers, tore down posters and ransacked a movie theatre showing the film in the Bihar state capital Patna.

Boyle said protest was "part of the fabric of life in India ... For us, 'slumdog' was always a very affectionate term because ... it was a hybrid, a mixture of underdog and rooting for the underdog, and obviously he comes from the slums."

Despite the objections, many Indians are celebrating the movie's commercial and critical success. The cast and crew were awarded for Global Excellence of the Year at the NDTV news channel's Indian of the Year awards.

REUTERS

Studios, SAG set for talks

CONTRACT The Screen Actors Guild and Hollywood's major studios will restart labour contract talks on Feb. 3, both groups said in statements signaling a thaw in their chilly relations.

SAG, which represents some 120,000 U.S. actors, and the studio's representative, the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers, will hold a new round of negotiations next Tuesday and Wednesday, the groups said late Wednesday.

No further details were given and the groups said they would not comment further.

The announcements follow the ouster of SAG's chief labour negotiator Doug Allen earlier this week by moderates of SAG's national governing board.

SAG members have been without a film and prime-time TV contract since their old pact expired June 30, after negotiations collapsed and the studios presented what they called their "final" offer.

The two sides were most at odds over how actors should be paid for work on the Internet, seen as a main distribution pipeline for entertainment in the future. REUTERS

Narnia film at Fox 2000

PROJECT The Voyage of the Dawn Treader — the third instalment of the Chronicles of Narnia franchise — will be setting sail from a new port.

The Walden Media project, which was let go by Walt Disney Pictures last month, is landing at Fox 2000, a unit of 20th Century Fox, which will develop it with an eye to release the movie in the holiday season of 2010.

Many of the key players are expected to stay with the project, including director Michael Apted and actor Ben Barnes, though a new writer might come aboard.

Because of the epic scope — and accompanying production costs — of the books, Walden partnered with Disney to produce and co-finance the adaptations. Disney backed out of Dawn Treader after failing to come to an agreement with Walden over budgets and release-date issues. Although the first instalment, The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, was an unabashed hit, the second, Prince Caspian, ran over budget and performed below the studio's expectations at the box office.

The third film faces creative as well as budgetary challenges. Although the C.S. Lewis book features quests, dragons and sea monsters galore, the story also has been criticized for lacking a clear antagonist. REUTERS

Entertainment in brief

BIOPIC The writer who took on Daniel Pearl will tackle the creator of 007. John Orloff, who wrote the script for A Mighty Heart, about the slain Wall Street Journal reporter, has been hired to pen the screenplay for Fleming, a biopic about writer Ian Fleming, the creator of James Bond. The feature will look at critical moments in the life of the colorful novelist and journalist. REUTERS

Cineplex | Empire | AMC | Alliance Atlantis | ATNY | Criterion | Independent

This week's new releases are highlighted in pink.

Screen Times

THESE PAGES COVER MOVIE START TIMES FROM FRI., JAN. 30 TO THURS., FEB 5. TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. COMPLETE LISTINGS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE AT METRONEWS.CA/MOVIES.

VANCOUVER

OMNIMAX THEATRE SCIENCE WORLD
1455 Quebec St., 604-443-7443

The Alps (STC) Fri-Thu 3 Fri 7:30
Grand Canyon Adventure: River at Risk (STC) Fri-Thu 1
Journey Into Amazing Caves (STC) A.M. Fri-Thu 11 Sat 7:30
Pulse: A Stomp Odyssey (STC) Sat-Thu 5
Roving Mars (G) Fri-Thu 12-2-4 Fri-Sat 8:30

CN IMAX THEATRE
201-999 Canada Place, 604-682-4629

The Dark Knight: The IMAX Experience (14A) Fri-Thu 2-8
Space Station 3D (G) Fri-Thu 1-6
Wild Ocean (G) Fri 12-7 Sat-Sun 12-5-7 Mon-Thu 12-7

DUNBAR THEATRE
4555 Dunbar Street, 604-222-2991

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) Fri 7-10:05 Sat 3:30-7-10:05 Sun 3:30-7:30 Mon-Thu 7:30

FIFTH AVENUE CINEMAS
2110 Burrard Street, 604-734-7469

Gran Torino (14A) Fri-Thu 1:10-3:50-6:50-9:15
The Maltese Falcon (STC) A.M. Sat 10
Milk (PG) Fri-Thu 1:15-3:55-6:40-9:20
The Reader (18A) Fri-Thu 1:40-4:20-7:10-9:40
Revolutionary Road (14A) Fri-Thu 1:50-4:30-7:20-9:45
Slumdog Millionaire (14A) Fri-Thu 1:30-4:10-7-9:30

GRANVILLE
855 Granville St., 604-684-4000

Hotel for Dogs (G) Fri 7-9:30 Sat-Sun 1:20-4:20-7-9:30 Mon-Thu 7-9:30
Love Me Again (PG) Fri 6:50-9:45 Sat-Sun 12:50-4-6:50-9:45 Mon-Thu 6:50-9:45
Marley & Me (G) Fri 7:10 Sat-Sun 1:10-3:55-7:10 Mon-Thu 7:10
Milk (PG) Fri 6:55-9:40 Sat-Sun 1:15-4:10-6:55-9:40 Mon-Thu 6:55-9:40
Opus Arte: La Fille Mal Gardée (Ballet) (STC) Sat 1
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Thu 9:25
Rachel Getting Married (PG) Fri 7:15-9:55 Sat-Sun 1:05-4:15-7:15-9:55 Mon-Thu 7:15-9:55
The Tale of Despereaux (G) Sat-Sun 1
Twilight (PG) Fri 6:45-9:35 Sat 3:50-6:45-9:35 Sun 12:55-3:50-6:45-9:35 Mon-Thu 6:45-9:35
Valkyrie (PG) Fri 7:05-9:50 Sat-Sun 4:05-7:05-9:50 Mon-Thu 7:05-9:50

HOLLYWOOD THEATRE
3123 W. Broadway, 604-738-3211
hollywoodtheatre.ca

Changeling (14A) Fri 7:30 Sat-Sun 1:30-7:30 Mon-Thu 7:30
Lars and the Real Girl (PG) Fri 9:45 Sat-Sun 3:45-9:45 Mon-Thu 9:45

OAKRIDGE
650 West 41st Ave., 604-263-1944

Taken (14A) Dolby Stereo Digital Fri 7-9:20 Dolby Stereo Digital Sat-Sun 1:30-4:30-7-9:20 Dolby Stereo Digital Mon-Thu 7-9:20
Underworld: Rise of the Lycans (18A) Fri 7:15-9:40 Sat-Sun 1-4-7:15-9:40 Mon-Thu 7:15-9:40
The Uninvited (14A) Fri 7:30-9:30 Sat-Sun 1:15-4:15-7:30-9:30 Mon-Thu 7:30-9:30

PACIFIC CINÉMATHÈQUE
1131 Howe Street, 604-688-3456
cinematheque.bc.ca

100 Years of Japanese Cinema (STC) Mon 9:30
The Catch (STC) Thu 9:25
Diary of a Shinjuku Thief (STC) Fri 9:30 Mon 7:30
Freedom's Fury (STC) Wed 8:30
In the Realm of the Senses (STC) Fri 7:30 Sat 9:15 Sun 7:30
The Pleasures of the Flesh (STC) Sun 9:30
Sing a Song of Sex (STC) Sat 7:15
Touched by Water (STC) Wed 7:30

PARK THEATRE
3440 Cambie Street, 604-876-2747

Welcome to the Sticks (PG) Fri 4-7-9:15 Sat-Sun 1:30-4-7-9:15 Mon-Tue 4-7-9:15 Wed-Thu 4

RIDGE THEATRE
3131 Arbutus Street, 604-738-6311

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) Fri-Sat 2:30-6-9:15 Sun-Wed 4-7:30 Thu 3
Opus Arte: La Fille Mal Gardée (Ballet) (STC) A.M. Sat 10

RIO ON BROADWAY
1660 E. Broadway, 604-878-Film
riotheatre.ca

An American Werewolf in London (STC) Fri 12
Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill! (STC) Sat 12
The Howling (STC) Fri
Revolutionary Road (14A) Fri 7-9:30 Sat-Sun 4:30-7-9:30 Mon-Thu 7-9:30
Vixen (STC) Sat

SCOTIABANK THEATRE VANCOUVER
900 Burrard St., 604-630-1407

Caesar and Cleopatra (STC) Sat 1
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) Fri-Thu 12:30-4:30-8:30
Defiance (14A) Fri-Tue 12:40-4-7:20-10:25 Wed 12:40-4-10:25 Thu 12:40-4-7:20-10:25
Gran Torino (14A) Fri-Thu 1:20-4:10-7:15-10:10
Revolutionary Road (14A) Fri-Thu 12:50-3:40-6:40-9:45
Taken (14A) No Passes Fri-Thu 1:45-4:40-7:30-10:30
Underworld: Rise of the Lycans (18A) No Passes Fri 1:30-4:20-7:10-10:15 Sat-Sun 1:30-4:20-7:10-10:15 Mon 7:10 Tue-Thu 1:30-4:20-7:10-10:15 Mon 1:30-4:20-10:15
The Uninvited (14A) Fri-Thu 1-4:15-7-10
The Wrestler (14A) Fri-Thu 12:45-3:50-6:50-9:50
Yes Man (PG) Fri 1:15-4:05-7:40-10:20 Sat 4:05-7:40-10:20 Sun 1:15-4:05-7:40-10:20 Mon 1:15-4:05-10:20 Tue-Wed 1:15-4:05-7:40-10:20 Thu 1:15-4:05-10:20

TINSELTOWN
International Village, 88 West Pender, 3rd floor, 604-806-0799
cinemark.com

Bride Wars (G) Fri-Thu 12:25-2:40-5:20-7:45-9:55
The Class (PG) No Passes Fri-Thu 12:45-4-7:05-10
Doubt (G) Fri-Thu 12:30-2:55-5:25-7:55-10:35
Frost/Nixon (PG) Fri-Thu 1:05-4:15-7:20-10:20
Inkheart (PG) No Passes Fri-Sun 1:50-4:20-7-9:35 No Passes Mon 1:50-4:20-9:35 No Passes Tue 1:50-4:20-7-9:35 No Passes Wed 1:50-4:20-9:35 No Passes Thu 1:50-4:20
Last Chance Harvey (PG) Fri-Thu 12:20-2:50-5:15-7:50-10:25
New In Town (PG) No Passes Fri-Thu 12-2:35-5:10-7:40-10:10
Notorious (18A) Fri-Thu 1:15-4:10-7:15-10:15
Paul Blart: Mall Cop (PG) Fri-Thu 12:15-2:45-5:05-7:25-9:45
The Reader (18A) Fri-Thu 1:35-4:25-7:10-10:05
Slumdog Millionaire (14A) Fri-Thu 12:05-1:30-3-4:30-6:05-7:30-9-10:30

VANCITY THEATRE
Vancouver International Film Centre
1181 Seymour Street, 604-683-Film
vifc.org

Ballast (14A) Fri-Mon 7-8:45 Wed-Thu 7-8:45

VAN EAST CINEMA
2290 Commercial Drive, 604-251-1313
vaneast.com

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) Fri 6:10-9:15 Sat-Sun 3:10-6:10-9:15 Mon-Thu 7:30

NORTH SHORE

ESPLANADE 6
200 West Esplanade, 604-983-2762

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) Fri 8 Sat 4:30-8 Sun 1-4:30-8 Mon-Thu 8
Gran Torino (14A) Fri 7:10-9:45 Sat-Sun 1:15-3:50-7:10-9:45 Mon-Thu 7:10-9:45
Hotel for Dogs (G) Fri 6:50-9:15 Sat-Sun 1:45-4:15-6:50-9:15 Mon-Thu 6:50-9:15
New In Town (PG) Fri 7:20-9:35 Sat-Sun 1:25-3:40-7:20-9:35 Mon-Thu 7:20-9:35
Opus Arte: La Fille Mal Gardée (Ballet) (STC) Sat 1
The Reader (18A) Fri 7-9:50 Sat-Sun 1:10-4-7-9:50 Mon-Thu 7-9:50
Underworld: Rise of the Lycans (18A) Fri 7:30-9:40 Sat-Sun 2-4:40-7:30-9:40 Mon-Thu 7:30-9:40

PARK & TILFORD
333 Brooksbank Ave., 604-985-3911

Caesar and Cleopatra (STC) Sat 1
Defiance (14A) Fri 6:50-9:50 Sat 3:40-6:50-9:50 Sun 12:35-3:40-6:50-9:50 Mon-Tue 6:50-9:50 Wed 9:50 Thu 6:50-9:50
Frost/Nixon (PG) Fri 6:40-9:30 Sat-Sun 12:45-3:30-6:40-9:30 Mon-Thu 6:40-9:30
Paul Blart: Mall Cop (PG) Fri 6:30-9:20 Sat-Sun 12:30-3:20-6:30-9:20 Mon-Thu 6:30-9:20
Slumdog Millionaire (14A) Fri 7-10 Sat-Sun 12:40-3:50-7-10 Mon-Thu 7-10 Star & Strollers Screening Thu 1
Taken (14A) No Passes Fri 7:10-9:40 No Passes Sat-Sun 12:50-4:10-7:10-9:40 No Passes Mon-Thu 7:10-9:40 Star & Strollers Screening, No Passes Thu 1
The Uninvited (14A) Fri 7:20-10:10 Sat-Sun 12:55-4-7:20-10:10 Mon-Thu 7:20-10:10

RICHMOND

RICHMOND CENTRE 6
6551 #3 Road, 604-273-7173

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) Fri 4:15-7:40 Sat-Sun 12:55-4:15-7:40 Mon-Thu 4:15-7:40
Paul Blart: Mall Cop (PG) Fri 4:25-7-9:30 Sat 1:05-4:25-7-9:30 Sun 1:05-4:25-7 Mon-Thu 4:25-7
Taken (14A) No Passes Fri 4:30-7:10-9:40 No Passes Sat 1:10-4:30-7:10-9:40 No Passes Sun 1:10-4:30-7:10 No Passes Mon-Thu 4:30-7:10
Underworld: Rise of the Lycans (18A) No Passes Fri 4:35-7:15-9:45 Sat 1:15-4:35-7:15-9:45 Sun 1:15-4:35-7:15 Mon-Thu 4:35-7:15
The Uninvited (14A) Fri 4:40-7:25-9:55 Sat 1:20-4:40-7:25-9:55 Sun 1:20-4:40-7:25 Mon-Thu 4:40-7:25
Valkyrie (PG) Fri 4:20-7:05-9:50 Sat 1-4:20-7:05-9:50 Sun 1-4:20-7:05 Mon-Thu 4:20-7:05

SILVERCITY RIVERPORT
14211 Entertainment Way, 604-272-7280

Bedtime Stories (G) Fri-Thu 1:10
Bride Wars (G) Fri-Thu 1:55-4:40-7:05-9:30
Caesar and Cleopatra (STC) Sat 1
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) Fri-Thu 12:30-4:15-8:15
The Dark Knight: The IMAX Experience (14A) Fri-Thu 12:15-3:30-7-10:30
Defiance (14A) Fri 12:45-4:15-7:25-10:40 Sat 4:15-7:25-10:40 Sun-Thu 12:45-4:15-7:25-10:40
Frost/Nixon (PG) Fri-Thu 12:55-3:55-7:10-10:10
Gran Torino (14A) Fri-Thu 1:45-4:50-7:50-10:45
Hotel for Dogs (G) Fri-Thu 1:15-4:10-6:45-9:35
Inkheart (PG) Fri-Thu 1:50-5-7:40-10:20
Marley & Me (G) Fri-Thu 1:05-3:55-6:50-9:50
New In Town (PG) Fri-Wed 2-4:45-7:45-10:35 Thu 4:45-7:45-10:35 Star & Strollers Screening Thu 1
Notorious (18A) Fri-Thu 4:35-7:40-10:35
Paul Blart: Mall Cop (PG) Fri-Thu 1:35-4:25-6:55-9:25
The Reader (18A) Fri-Thu 12:35-3:50-7:25-10:40
Revolutionary Road (14A) Fri-Wed 1:25-4:55-7:55-10:45 Thu 4:55-7:55-10:45 Star & Strollers Screening Thu 1
Slumdog Millionaire (14A) Fri-Thu 12:40-4:05-7-10:05
Taken (14A) No Passes Fri-Thu 1-4-7:15-10
Underworld: Rise of the Lycans (18A) No Passes Fri 12:20-3:45-7:20-9:45 Sat-Thu 12:20-3:45-7:20-9:45
The Uninvited (14A) Fri-Thu 1:30-4:30-7:30-10:15
The Wrestler (14A) Fri-Thu 1:20-4:20-7:35-10:20

BURNABY

DOLPHIN CINEMAS
4555 E. Hastings St., 604-293-0332

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) Fri-Thu 8:30
Hotel for Dogs (G) Fri 6:30 Sat-Sun 1:30-4-6:30 Mon-Thu 6:30
Paul Blart: Mall Cop (PG) Fri 7-9 Sat-Sun 1-3-5-7-9 Mon-Thu 7-9

SILVERCITY METROPOLIS
4700 Kingsway Ave., 604-435-7474

Bride Wars (G) Fri-Thu 1:05-4:05-7:25-10:05
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) Fri-Thu 12:30-4-7:45
Gran Torino (14A) Fri-Thu 1-4:15-7:15-10:10
Inkheart (PG) Fri-Thu 12:45-4:10-6:55-9:45
My Bloody Valentine 3D (18A) Fri-Tue 1-3:40-7:10-9:45 Wed 1-3:40-9:45 Thu 1-3:40-7:10-9:45
Notorious (18A) Fri-Thu 12:50-4:10-7-10
Paul Blart: Mall Cop (PG) Fri-Thu 12:45-3:50-6:45-9:50
Taken (14A) No Passes Fri-Thu 1:10-3:45-7:40-10:15
Underworld: Rise of the Lycans (18A) No Passes Fri 1:20-3:55-7:30-9:55 Sat-Thu 1:20-3:55-7:30-9:55
The Uninvited (14A) Fri-Thu 12:40-3:15-7:05-9:40

STATION SQUARE
220-6200 McKay Ave., 604-434-7711

Bedtime Stories (G) Fri 4:55 Sat-Sun 2:05-4:55 Mon-Thu 4:55
Defiance (14A) Fri 4:30-7:15-10 Sat 1:45-4:30-7:15-10 Sun 1:45-4:30-7:15 Mon-Thu 4:30-7:15
Frost/Nixon (PG) Fri 4:40-7:10 Sat-Sun 1:50-4:40-7:10 Mon-Thu 4:40-7:10
Hotel for Dogs (G) Fri 4:45-7-9:45 Sat 1:55-4:45-7-9:45 Sun 1:55-4:45-7 Mon-Thu 4:45-7
Last Chance Harvey (PG) Fri-Sat 7:25-10:10 Sun-Thu 7:25
Marley & Me (G) Fri 4:35-7:05 Sat 2-4:35-7:05 Sun 2-4:35 Mon-Thu 4:35
New In Town (PG) Fri 5-7:30-10:05 Sat 2:15-5-7:30-10:05 Sun 2:15-5-7:30 Mon-Thu 5-7:30
Twilight (PG) Fri 4:50-7:20-9:50 Sat 2:10-4:50-7:20-9:50 Sun 2:10-4:50-7:20 Mon-Thu 4:50-7:20
The Unborn (14A) Fri-Sat 10:15
Valkyrie (PG) Fri-Sat 9:55 Sun-Thu 7:05

NEW WEST/ COQUITLAM

SILVERCITY COQUITLAM
170 Schoolhouse Street, 604-523-2911

Bedtime Stories (G) Fri-Thu 12:45-3:45-6:45
Bride Wars (G) Fri-Thu 1:20-4:20-7:20-10:20
Caesar and Cleopatra (STC) Sat 1
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) Fri-Thu 12:10-4:20-8:10
Defiance (14A) Fri-Thu 12:05-3:15-6:35-10:05
Doubt (G) Fri-Thu 1:50
Frost/Nixon (PG) Fri-Thu 3:55-7:10:05
Gran Torino (14A) Fri-Thu 1:30-4:30-7:30-10:30
Hotel for Dogs (G) Fri-Thu 12:35-3:35-6:40-9:40
Inkheart (PG) Fri-Thu 1:10-4:10-7:10-10:10
Marley & Me (G) Fri-Thu 12:30-3:30-6:30-9:30
My Bloody Valentine 3D (18A) Fri 4:50-7:50-10:45 Sat-Thu 4:50-7:55-10:45
New In Town (PG) Fri-Tue 1:25-4:05-7-9:45 Wed 4:05-7-9:45 Thu 1:25-4:05-7-9:45 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1
Notorious (18A) Fri 1:35-4:35-7:35-10:35 Sat 4:35-7:35-10:35 Sun-Thu 1:35-4:35-7:35-10:35
Paul Blart: Mall Cop (PG) Fri-Thu 12:15-2:40-5:10-7:40-10:15
The Reader (18A) Fri-Thu 12:20-3:20-6:20-9:20
Revolutionary Road (14A) Fri-Thu 12:55-3:55-6:55-9:55
Slumdog Millionaire (14A) Fri-Tue 1-4-7:10 Wed 4-7:10 Thu 1-4-7:10 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1
Taken (14A) No Passes Fri-Thu 12:20-2:50-5:15-7:45-10:50
The Tale of Despereaux (G) Fri-Thu 1:20
Underworld: Rise of the Lycans (18A) No Passes Fri 1:20-3:55-6:40-9:35 Sat-Thu 1:20-3:55-6:40-9:35
The Uninvited (14A) Fri-Thu 1:45-4:45-7:45-10:45
The Wrestler (14A) Fri-Thu 1:40-4:40-7:40-10:40
Yes Man (PG) Fri-Thu 9:45

SURREY/WHITE ROCK/LANGLEY

CLOVA
5732-176th St., Surrey, 604-541-9527

Bolt (G) Sat-Sun 1:30
Frost/Nixon (PG) Fri-Thu 9:15
Gran Torino (14A) Fri-Thu 7

HOLLYWOOD 3 CINEMA
7125-138th Street, Surrey, 604-592-4441

Australia (PG) Sat-Sun 12
Bolt (G) Fri 4:50 Sat-Sun 2:45-4:50 Mon-Thu 4:50
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Sat-Sun 2:45
My Bloody Valentine (18A) Fri-Thu 9:15
Seven Pounds (PG) Fri-Thu 9:10
The Tale of Despereaux (G) Fri 4:50 Sat-Sun 2:30-4:50 Mon-Thu 4:50
Twilight (PG) Fri 7 Sat-Sun 12:10-7 Mon-Thu 7
The Unborn (14A) Fri-Thu 9:25
Valkyrie (PG) Fri-Thu 7
Yes Man (PG) Fri 4:50-7 Sat-Sun 12:30-4:50-7 Mon-Thu 4:50-7

STRAWBERRY HILL GRANDE
12161-72nd Ave, Surrey, 604-501-9400

Bride Wars (G) Fri 1:30-4:20-6:50-9:25 Sat 4:20-6:50-9:25 Sun-Thu 1:30-4:20-6:50-9:25
Caesar and Cleopatra (STC) Sat 1
Chandni Chowk to China (PG) Fri-Thu 1-4:35-8:45
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) Fri-Thu 12:50-4:40-9
Gran Torino (14A) Fri-Tue 1:05-4-7:15-10:10 Wed 4-7:15-10:10 Thu 1:05-4-7:15-10:10 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1
Inkheart (PG) Fri-Thu 1:10-4:05-6:45-9:30
Luck By Chance (Hindi w/e.s.t.) (STC) Fri-Thu 12:45-3:50-6:55-10
New In Town (PG) Fri-Tue 1:45-4:15-7:20-9:45 Wed 4:15-7:20-9:45 Thu 1:45-4:15-7:20-9:45 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1
Paul Blart: Mall Cop (PG) Fri-Thu 1:20-3:45-7:05-9:35
Slumdog Millionaire (14A) Fri-Thu 1:15-4:10-7:10-10:05
Taken (14A) No Passes Fri-Thu 1:35-4:25-7-9:40
Underworld: Rise of the Lycans (18A) No Passes Fri 1:40-4:30-7:25-9:55 Sat-Thu 1:40-4:30-7:25-9:55
The Uninvited (14A) Fri-Thu 1:25-3:55-7:30-9:50

STUDIO 12 GUILDFORD
15051-101st Ave, Surrey, 604-581-1176

Bride Wars (G) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:50-4:35-7:05
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 9
Doubt (G) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:10-7:05
Frost/Nixon (PG) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 9:40
Gran Torino (14A) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:25-4:15-7:10-9:55
Hotel for Dogs (G) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:35-3:55-6:45
Inkheart (PG) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:20-4:05-6:50-9:30
My Bloody Valentine 3D (18A) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 4:25-9:50
Notorious (18A) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:15-4:20-7:15-10:10
Paul Blart: Mall Cop (PG) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:30-4:10-6:55-9:25
Revolutionary Road (14A) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1-3:50-6:40-9:35
Slumdog Millionaire (14A) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:05-4-7-10
Taken (14A) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:40-4:30-7:20-9:45
Underworld: Rise of the Lycans (18A) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:55-4:40-7:30-10:15
The Uninvited (14A) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 2-4:45-7:40-10:05

RIALTO
1732-152nd Street, White Rock, 604-541-9527, criterionentheatres.com

Gran Torino (14A) Fri 7-9:15 Sat-Sun 2:10-7-9:15 Mon-Thu 7-9:15
Revolutionary Road (14A) Fri 7:10-9:25 Sat-Sun 2-7:10-9:25 Mon-Thu 7:10-9:25

CRITERION 4 WHITE ROCK
2381 King George Highway, 604-531-7456, criterionentheatres.com

Milk (PG) Fri 7:20-9:40 Sat-Sun 2:20-7:20-9:40 Mon-Thu 7:20-9:40
Paul Blart: Mall Cop (PG) Fri 7:10-9 Sat-Sun 2:10-7:10-9 Mon-Thu 7:10-9
Slumdog Millionaire (14A) Fri 7-9:20 Sat-Sun 2-7-9:20 Mon-Thu 7-9:20
Taken (14A) Fri 7:30-9:25 Sat-Sun 2:30-7:30-9:25 Mon-Thu 7:30-9:25

COLOSSUS LANGLEY
20090-91A Ave, Langley, 604-513-8747

Bedtime Stories (G) Fri-Sun 12:50-3:40 Mon-Thu 3:40
Bride Wars (G) Fri 1:05-4:05-7:45-10:10 Sat 4:05-7:45-10:10 Sun 1:05-4:05-7:45-10:10 Mon-Thu 4:05-7:45-10:10
Caesar and Cleopatra (STC) Sat 1
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) Fri-Sun 12:45-4:20-8:10 Mon-Thu 4:20-8:10
The Dark Knight: The IMAX Experience (14A) Fri-Sun 12-3:15-7-10:15 Mon-Thu 3:15-7-10:15
Defiance (14A) Fri-Sun 12:30-3:35-6:55-10:05 Mon-Thu 3:35-6:55-10:05
Frost/Nixon (PG) Fri-Thu 4:15-10:30
Gran Torino (14A) Fri-Sun 12:25-3:30-6:50-10 Mon-Thu 3:30-6:50-10
Hotel for Dogs (G) Fri-Sun 12:35-3:50-7:15-9:50 Mon-Thu 3:50-7:15-9:50
Inkheart (PG) Fri-Sun 12:10-3:45-7:10-9:55 Mon-Thu 3:45-7:10-9:55
My Bloody Valentine 3D (18A) Fri-Sun 12:15-4:25-7:40-10:15 Mon-Thu 4:25-7:40-10:15
New In Town (PG) Fri-Sun 12:05-3:20-7-10:20 Mon-Tue 3:20-7-10:20 Wed 7-10:20 Thu 3:20-7-10:20 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 3
Notorious (18A) Fri-Thu 7:05-10:25
Paul Blart: Mall Cop (PG) Fri-Sun 12:20-4:05-7:10-10:10 Mon-Thu 4:05-7:10-10:10
The Reader (18A) Fri-Sun 12-3:25-6:45-9:45 Mon-Thu 3:25-6:45-9:45
Revolutionary Road (14A) Fri-Sun 12:10-4:30-7:35-10:20 Mon-Tue 4:30-7:35-10:20 Wed 7:35-10:20 Thu 4:30-7:35-10:20 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 3
Slumdog Millionaire (14A) Fri-Sun 1-4:30-7:30-10:30 Mon-Thu 4:30-7:30-10:30
Taken (14A) No Passes Fri-Sun 12:55-4-7:20-9:55 No Passes Mon-Thu 4-7:20-9:55
Underworld: Rise of the Lycans (18A) No Passes Fri 1:20-4:35-7:50-10:25 Sat-Sun 1:20-4:35-7:50-10:25 Mon-Thu 4:35-7:50-10:25
The Uninvited (14A) Fri-Sun 12:40-3:55-7:55-10:15 Mon-Thu 3:55-7:55-10:15
The Wrestler (14A) Fri-Sun 1:25-4:10-7:25-10:05 Mon-Thu 4:10-7:25-10:05
Yes Man (PG) Fri-Sun 1:15-7:30 Mon-Thu 7:30

The top pop albums, according to Billboard Magazine
1. Fearless, Taylor Swift; **2.** I AM...SASHA FIERCE, Beyoncé; **3.** Dark Horse, Nickelback; **4.** 808s and Heartbreak, Kanye West; **5.** Twilight Soundtrack, Various Artists. **REUTERS**

Music

Take Me Out, again

Franz Ferdinand shake things up on third album

BRYAN BORZYKOWSKI
for Metro Canada

Since 2004, Glasgow foursome Franz Ferdinand have been hammering out disco-infused indie rock. Not only did they become one of the biggest bands in the world with their massive hit Take Me Out, but they started a new wave revolution, with acts like Maximo Park and Bloc Party following in their footsteps.

But success isn't an antidote for boredom, so on Tonight: Franz Ferdinand, the group's third full-length, the band decided to shake things up.

"You've got to push yourselves to try new things," says Alex Kapranos, the band's lead singer. "If we kept on doing what we have been for the rest of our lives, it would have been boring. We're keeping things exciting for ourselves and the people listening to it."

While not every track is a major departure — No You Girls might be the band's most infectious dance rocker to date — other songs are nearly unrecognizable. Lucid Dreams, for one, is an eight-minute keyboard driven electro anthem.

"That track was cut down from a 40-minute session," says Kapranos. "That song has quite a different dynamic to it — it's much more dance floor. We'd been listening to a lot of mixes, where you build in a slow gradual way and bring the listener up. We're using different techniques than verse, chorus, verse."

It's easy for a band to try new things, but what happens if their fans hate it? Like every musician, Kapranos says he writes for himself, not to sell records, but he did make sure to play his new songs live before releasing them.

"If we kept on doing what we have been for the rest of our lives it would have been boring. We're keeping things exciting for ourselves and the people listening to it." Alex Kapranos

"Part of developing a new sound is playing it to the fans," he explains. "We played a bunch of smaller shows in Glasgow and the States. Doing that helps you know what's working or what's not. You can try out the most crazy experimental ideas and sometimes it works."

Still, some fans may be curious as to what Kapranos was referring to, when in the band's new bio, he says that the disc is an album "to fling yourself around your room to as you psyche yourself for an evening of hedonism."

Don't worry, Tonight is not an all out techno record, but it does take their disco-friendly tunes to new, ass-shaking heights. That's thanks to their copious use of synths. "We wanted to go with a dance floor feel," says Franz's frontman. "There were a lot of keyboards around the studio and we wanted to use them.

"But we've always been interested in this kind of music," he adds. "Whether it's the heavy kick drum on Take Me Out, we've always tried to harness this in a different way. This time the bass is really the heart of the record."

SONY MUSIC PHOTO

Tonight, Franz Ferdinand's new album, was released this week.

But it wasn't just a love of dance music that drove the band to beef up their club-ready sounds. They felt like they needed to rebel.

"When we first got together we were rebelling against the sounds that were around us. We didn't feel indie guitar music had the dance floor feel, and the dance floor didn't have the sounds of indie rock. But with any band who tries something new it become absorbed and part of the surroundings," Kapranos explains. "So with this, we're rebelling against the appropriation of ourselves."

Vedder and the new America

SoundCheck

Alan Cross

alan@ongoinghistory.com

Here are two things I never expected to hear: (1) "As your financial adviser, I won't be charging you any management fees this year because your portfolio went down and I blame myself." And (2) "I have Eddie Vedder on the phone for you."

I'm still paying management fees on my RRSP. Eddie, on the other hand, was, in fact, on the phone from somewhere in Seattle. And despite his well-documented, er, reserve, the Pearl Jam frontman sounded, well, rather verklempt — in a good way. So how is he doing, following the inaugural of U.S. President Barack Obama?

"I'm OK. I'm beyond OK. I'm great. I'm so overwhelmed and overcome with emotion. We have new a president as of a couple of hours ago and I've got all my nerves right on the surface here. I feel incredible, I feel relieved, I feel exhausted."

So what kind of hopes and predictions does he now have, I ask.

"Two years ago, you were wondering what could there possibly be to unite our country and get us out of this mess. What can get us back on the positive? What can bring us back into some kind of standing with the international community? And it seemed like that there would not be any answer. Who knew we would get to this moment?"

Maybe Barack Obama's greatest contribution is simply going to be the reignition of hope, he suggests.

"So now it's up to us to keep that candle, turn that into a flame and keep it burning. And to protect and serve him and serve our nation now that the electorate has been invigorated."

We had our own federal election in October and the turnout and interest was low. However, hundreds of Canadians travelled to Washington to take part in American history.

"Wow. Well, you know, we are connected — more than just geographically. Our cultures are very similar and when one goes down, the other is going to follow in certain ways."

Eddie and I talked about everything from the upcoming reissue of Pearl Jam's Ten album (due March 24) to any lingering bad feelings towards Ticketmaster.

But here was my big question: How did Eddie come to cover a Canadian song for the Into the Wild soundtrack? The answer next week.

The Ongoing History of New Music can be heard on stations across Canada. Read more at ongoinghistory.com and exploremusic.com

Metro recommends

• BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN, WORKING ON A DREAM:

The Boss diversifies his sound by incorporating a wide range of influences while staying true to his roots.

• LATE OF THE PIER, FANTASY BLACK CHANNEL:

Lively Britpop act blends '80s techno, new wave and rock with reckless abandon for some danceable madcap fun.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

TOP 10 MOBILE DOWNLOADS

1	Poker Face	Lady Gaga
2	Live Your Life	T.I. ft. Rihanna
3	Heartless	Kanye West
4	Sex On Fire	Kings Of Leon
5	Beautiful	Akon
6	Single Ladies	Beyoncé
7	Love Story	Taylor Swift
8	Hot N Cold	Katy Perry
9	Rock N' Roll Train	AC/DC
10	Circus	Britney Spears

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Going Away

TRAVELDESK@METRONEWS.CA

Following the A-list to Anguilla

Despite its sprinkling of stardust, this tiny island has lots to offer lower-profile visitors

DAVID WHITLEY
for Metro Canada

DAVID WHITLEY/FOR METRO CANADA

Left, a massage hut by the beach at Shoal Bay East, Anguilla. Right, the stunning infinity pool at the CuisinArt Resort.

Going around Anguilla feels a bit like stalking. It seems as though every spot on the island has a celebrity rumour attached to it — the restaurant that P. Diddy likes to visit, the bar where Robert De Niro made cocktails for a joke, the villa where Denzel Washington threw his 50th birthday party. And that's just skimming the surface.

In recent years Anguilla has become the upmarket celebrity hang-out of choice. It's seriously A-list, with a guest roster that includes the Clintons, Al Gore, Brad Pitt and repeat visitor Beyoncé.

It wasn't always like this. Historically, the tiny British Caribbean territory was rather poor. It has next to nothing in the way of natural resources and is barely big enough to fit a small airport, let alone one that can accept jet planes.

But what it does have is beaches. Anguilla regularly crops up on lists of the world's best beaches, and it's usually Shoal Bay East they have in mind. This is the one that the day trippers from other islands come to, and it has dazzlingly white sands. Those celebs are well within their rights to keep shades on all the time here.

In truth, though, Anguilla has half-a-dozen such world-class beaches. Rendezvous Bay on the island's west end is among those; and one of the swankiest joints on the island, the CuisinArt Resort and Spa, looks out over the beach.

It's visually stunning, with water from the pool funnelling off over the horizon and gleaming Greek-style white buildings facing the Caribbean Sea. The suites are enormous, the balconies have views to kill for and there's a lobster banquet twice a week.

It doesn't take long to realize why the hotshot CEOs and Hollywood stars come here. Michael J Fox, Celine Dion and Jay-Z are among the big names that have stayed at CuisinArt.

One of the other reasons that the rich and famous choose Anguilla is the locals. They're possibly the least star-struck people on earth.

There's no harassment for autographs or squawking mobs following every footstep — the Anguillans are quite happy to leave their visitors alone, and it's that peace and privacy that appeals.

The VIPs pay for it too. One step beyond the costly resorts are the ultra-expensive private villas that come with their own chefs and butler service.

The Altamer, for example, costs a minimum of $30,000 US per week — and that excludes food. But the celebs don't care — it's pocket change, and they'll often have the bill signed off without checking the amount.

The ordinary pleb isn't priced out, however. There are still a few outposts that remain true to the original Anguilla. One is Tasty's in South Hill, which is unquestionably the best value restaurant on the island. It's bright, it's colourful and the food has a proper Caribbean flavour, thanks to Chef Dale Carty, who is a local. The fresh fish is always good, but the goat curry is the true stand-out.

The other defiantly unglammed-up option is Lloyds. It's the oldest hotel on the island, dating back to 1959 when there was no electricity, let alone paved roads. It's now a little yellow guest house of the best kind. The staff are friendly, guests chat over breakfast together and a couple of long-term residents offer to give newcomers the inside track on the island.

It attracts an extraordinarily diverse bunch, which is in contrast to the American-heavy clientele the rest of the island gets. Kiwi wedding parties, Swedish backpacker and Trinidadian health workers all sit around and swap stories.

Anguilla may have a heavy sprinkling of stardust, but it's still possible for the average Joe to enjoy Caribbean cocktails and glistening beaches in the ultimate Hollywood hang-out.

Anguilla

Getting there: There are no direct flights to Anguilla from outside the Caribbean. Most visitors will either get the ferry over from St. Martin or fly with LIAT from Antigua, liatairline.com.
Staying there: Suites at the CuisinArt Resort and Spa, cuisinartresort.com, start at $475 US a night; rooms at Lloyds, lloyds.ai, start at $75 a night.
Info: anguilla-vacation.com

Immortal Michelle Obama
Michelle Obama is being immortalized in wax by Madame Tussauds wax museum. The figure will be unveiled in March after six months of work by designers who studied photos and videos of Michelle. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Going Out

Mix of Six

HOT & HAPPENING WEEKEND EVENTS IN THE CITY
For more, visit: **metronews.ca/entertainment**

St. Valentine's Day Massacre
When: to Feb. 15
Where: New Revue Stage on Granville Island
No Hearts. No Flowers. No Mercy! A dark alley … some desperate characters … it all leads up to one thing. A ruthless improvisational TheatreSports Tournament Tickets: $12-$18. Info: vtsl.com.

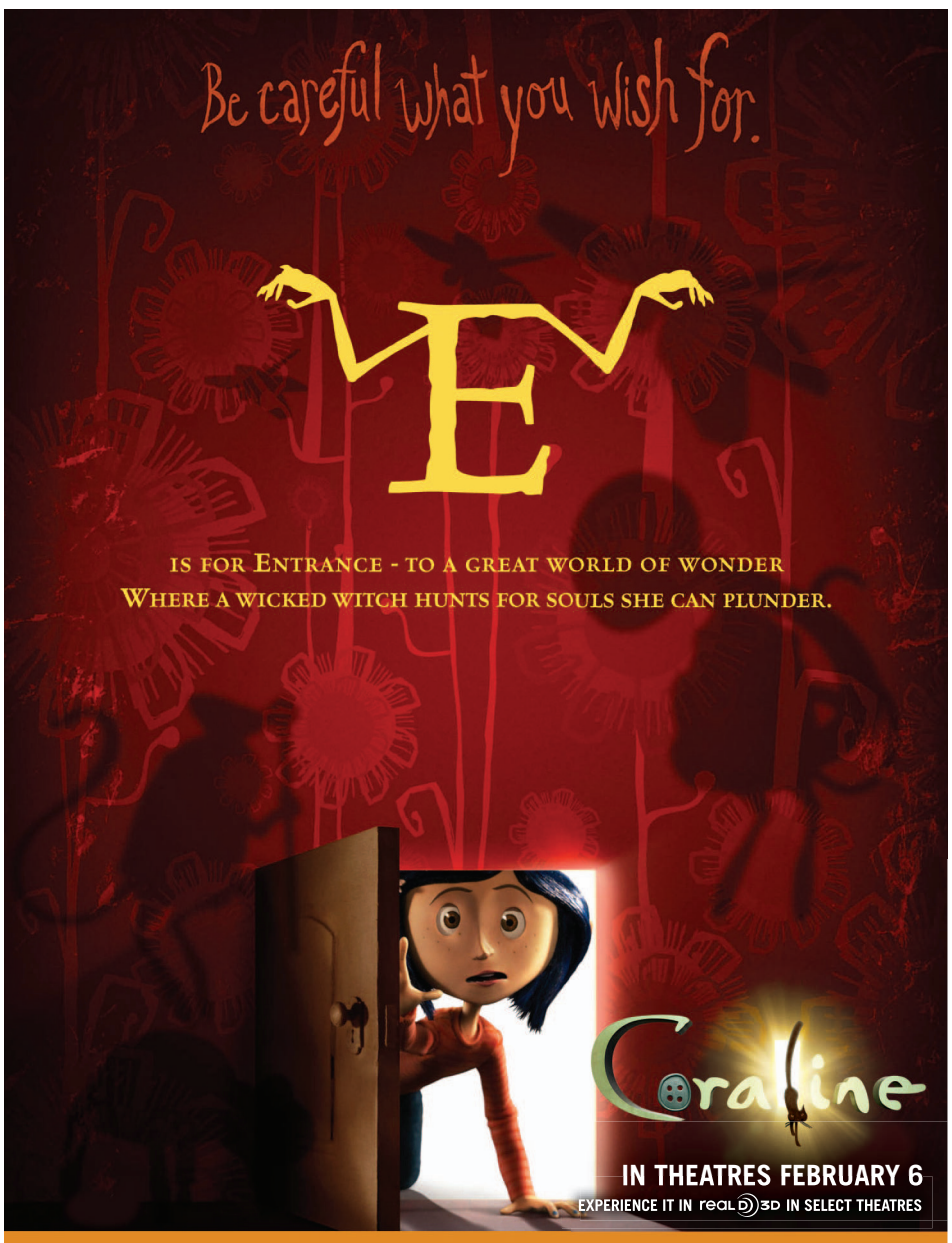
The Constant Wife
When: To Feb. 22
Where: Stanley Industrial Alliance Stage
Why get mad when you can get even? In this classic comedy of marriage and revenge, the discovery of her husband's infidelity sparks in Constance some rather unusual behaviour! Tickets: from $25. Info: artsclub.com

Miss Julie
When: Ends Saturday
Where: Vancouver Playhouse
An adaptation of August Strindberg's play about class, gender and power is transposed to Mississippi in 1964. Miss Julie, the daughter of a white Mississippi judge, provokes a relationship with the family' black chauffeur. Tickets: from $33.

Etta James
When: Fri., Sat., 7 p.m.
Where: River Rock Casino
Legendary singer Etta James hits the stage at the River Rock Casino to sing hits like Tell Mama, Fool That I Am and Don't Cry Baby as well as hits from her most recent album All The Way. Cost: $54.50-$67.50.

Monster Jam
When: Saturday
Where: B.C. Place Stadium
This one-night only event features a lot of loud noises, big trucks and infinite amounts of fun. Participating trucks include the legendary Grave Digger and current World Finals Racing Champion, John Seasock, will drive Batman.

Rapture on RAW Desserts
When: Friday
Where: Culinary Arts Institute
Make delicious and healthy desserts. In this class, you will learn to make healthy, dairy free, yeast free, wheat and gluten free, refined sugar free versions of your favourites.



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Odds of winning depend on number of entries received. Winners will be required to answer a skill testing question. For full contest rules and details, visit www.metronews.ca

So You Think You Can Dance comes to town

ROBYN YOUNG
for Metro Canada

Arassay Reyes is just as sweet and personable over the phone as she came across on stage during last fall's hit show So You Think You Can Dance Canada.

The Havana, Cuba native is one of the top 10 dancers from the first season of the CTV series who will cross the country on a live tour over the next three weeks.

When told she was obviously a crowd favourite and could have easily made the final four, the talented brunette modestly gushes: "Oh, thank you. I really appreciate it, thank you so much."

Her English isn't perfect: she moved to Canada and began learning the language just three months before she was selected for the show.

The 21-year-old's dad first moved to B.C. seven years ago and last year Reyes finally joined him.

"I came to visit and after that I told him maybe I will try to move here, because it's a beautiful country and you have freedom," she said.

She now calls South Surrey, B.C. home, where she lives with her dad, stepmom and grandparents.

The charming brunette, who was paired mostly with Nico Archambault of Montreal — the winner of the televised competition — will again appear on stage with the heartthrob.

She said she's looking forward to performing one of her favourite routines with him, a contemporary piece to Queen's Somebody to Love in which Archambault dons black feather wings.

"We really have the connection to be partners," Reyes said. "I don't know how that connection happened."

Throughout the competition the couple was applauded for their outstanding chemistry on stage.

Reyes can't wait to get back on stage: "We're going to perform for thousands and thousands of people and I'm so happy to do it."

CTV PHOTO

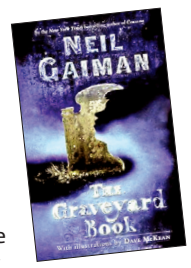
From left, back: Natalli Reznik, Nico Archambault, Kaitlyn Fitzgerald, Vincent Noiseux; front: Miles Faber, Lisa Auguste, Danny Arbour, Arassay Reyes, Izaak Smith, Allie Bertram.

Premiere

- So You Think You Can Dance Canada 2009 Tour will debut tonight in Vancouver at General Motors Place. The group will repeat the performance 15 times over the next three weeks, hitting about three cities a week.

Metro's 7th Heaven: Metro taps what's hot right now

1 The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman
BOOK Gaiman's story about a boy raised by a vampire, a werewolf and a witch may have won the John Newbery Medal — the top prize for children's literature — but the tale's eerie edge cuts across age groups. Really, this is one giant spookfest for the entire family.



2 Vicky Cristina Barcelona
DVD Woody Allen's twisted and irreverent take on all things love, replete with ménage a trois, adultery and violent passion. A fiery Penelope Cruz sizzles in the Spanish sun and Javier Bardem kills with those bedroom eyes. Not recommended for Valentine's Day viewing.

3 Tonight/Franz Ferdinand
ALBUM The Scottish foursome are back with what they do best — getting a party started. Their third album holds some serious grooves, mixing post-punk beats with 21st century cool. And some mellow moments — perfect for the morning after.

4 Super Bowl ads
ADS Come Sunday there will be football frenzy, munch parties, and some of the best commercials you'll see on TV this year.

5 Caesar and Cleopatra
FILM Get a taste of Canadian theatre — on the silver screen. This filmed version of The Stratford Shakespeare festival's acclaimed production of the George Bernard Shaw play is the perfect antidote to the Oscar bug. Playing at select Cineplex theatres.

6 Project Runway Canada: Second Season
TV SHOW Haute couture. High drama. Supermodel host Iman. Fourteen aspiring designers. One winner. Enough said. Catch it every Tuesday at 10 p.m. on Global.

7 Cupid Cup
DRINK As Valentine's Day frenzy gears up for its yearly romance bonanza, Belvedere Vodka serves up some liquid love, perfect for you and your snuggle partner. Mix 1 oz Belvedere Cytrus with equal amount of white cranberry juice. Top it with champagne and garnish with berry of choice.

No Super Bowl party for Hef

Hugh Hefner's Playboy magazine has cancelled its annual Super Bowl pre-game extravaganza, a party it has been throwing before the big game for nine years, according to Bloomberg News. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Television

Super Bowl still the big ticket for TV

IntelleVision

Rick McGinnis
rick.mcginnis@metronews.ca

AD SPACE: The Super Bowl is one of the remaining real events on TV, something that has to be experienced in real time, preferably not alone. While primetime viewership erodes, an astounding 97 million U.S. viewers tuned into last year's game, and NBC is counting on similar numbers for not just Sunday's game, but the pre-game and half-time shows — and the commercials.

Super Bowl ad spots are premium products, and at least since Apple's epochal 1984 ad launching the Macintosh computer with director Ridley Scott's movie-quality visuals, Super Bowl commercials have been events. And for the most part, Canadians can't see them.

Sim-subbing is the industry term for the preemption of the U.S. broadcast signal with the local one by cable and satellite providers, and it insures that Canadian viewers will only see the ads that CTV, the Super Bowl's local broadcaster, has been paid to air. It's standard industry practice, in effect whenever the same show airs simultaneously on both sides of the border, but there are some who say that it diminishes some of the game's lustre as an event.

"These ads are costly," says Brian Steinberg, TV editor for Advertising Age magazine. "The production values add a couple of million dollars on top of the ad buy price … If you're a first timer or a small company who get into these things, they're probably blowing all of their marketing budget on one ad."

With this kind of cash at stake, U.S. advertisers want to focus on their target market, says Steinberg. "I think the ads are aiming first at the U.S. audience, and I don't think Canadians are the biggest users of GoDaddy, or these other one-shot ads."

But Rick Brace, CTV's president of Revenue, Business Planning and Sports, says that GoDaddy has bought time on his network's broadcast, along with Nissan, Ford, Dodge, Kia, Labatt, Universal Studios and Pepsi, which has produced two spots especially for the Canadian market. While the buy-in for time on the Canadian broadcast isn't as rich as the $3 million US NBC is asking for a 30-second spot — CTV won't reveal what their spots cost, though Brace says "It's a premium product and we sell it as such," — 4.2 million Canadian viewers did tune into last year's game in English Canada, making it one of the top four TV events of the year.

NFL Super Bowl XLIII

Geography might mean a lot to a TV network, but it's nearly irrelevant on the Internet, and Brace says that most Super Bowl ads will be online within hours, even minutes, of their Sunday premiere. Steinberg says that for now, however, the broadcast event is still paramount. "They will be all over YouTube, but the biggest audience you'll get in one fell swoop will be on that TV screen … It's nice to get some ancillary buzz, but the U.S. consumer base is their main customer."

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

Rick's TVPicks

The Musical Brain

Air date: Jan. 31
Network: CTV

The centrepiece scene in this documentary is probably Sting getting an MRI to help medical science understand how musicians' brains work. The great unanswered question, however, is why so many people like crap music.

Charles The Passionate Prince

Air date: Feb. 1
Network: CBC Newsworld

This heavily burnished BBC documentary follows Prince Charles around for a year on the eve of his 60th birthday, and how his long stay in the waiting room of monarchy has turned him into one of Britain's most relentless lobbyists.

The Global Hunt For Mr. Swirl

Air date: Feb. 2
Network: CBC Newsworld

Canada became a setting in an Interpol manhunt four years ago when they discovered that the anonymous object of a pedophilia investigation was one Christopher Neil of British Columbia, though the Internet was the real location where he was unmasked, as detailed in this gruesome British documentary.

–RICK MCGINNIS /METRO CANADA

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GlobalStyle

Kenya Hunt

Read Kenya, exclusively at metronews.ca/globalstyle and check out her blog at kenyastyle.com

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FRIDAY

VA	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime	251	308	3 CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	Rick Mercer	Marketplace	Just for Laughs (N) (CC)		CBC News: The National (N)		(:05) The Hour
	255	358	6 JOY	E News	The Insider	Smarter Than a 5th Grader?		20/20 (CC)		20/20 (CC)		News (N)
	250	321	9 CTV	etalk (CC)	Hollywood	Ghost Whisperer (CC)		Flashpoint "Planets Aligned"		Raising the Bar (N) (CC)		News (N)
	252	336	11 GTV	Entertainment	ET Canada	Howie Do It	Howie Do It	Friday Night Lights (N) (CC)		NUMB3RS "High Exposure"		News (N)
	256	389	12 VI	Instant Star	TMZ (N) (CC)	Wife Swap (N) (CC)		Comedy Now (CC)		Stargate SG-1 "Family Ties"		News (CC)
	253	359	13 CITY	Law & Order: SVU		Mantracker	Mantracker	Survivorman Costa Rica.		Crusoe (CC)		EP Daily
	-	-	14 CW	Deal-No Deal	Deal-No Deal	Hates Chris	The Game (N)	13: Fear Is Real (N) (CC)		Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Frasier (CC)
	289	381	15 CBS	Entertainment	The Insider	Ghost Whisperer (CC)		Flashpoint "Planets Aligned"		NUMB3RS "High Exposure"		News (N)
	287	379	16 NBC	Evening Mag.	Inside Edition	Howie Do It	Howie Do It	Friday Night Lights (N) (CC)		Dateline NBC (CC)		News (N)
	288	380	21 ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Wife Swap (N) (CC)		20/20 (CC)		20/20 (CC)		KOMO 4 News
	290	382	23 FOX	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	House "Not Cancer" (CC)		Lie to Me "Moral Waiver"		News (N)	Most Wanted	Family Guy
news	502	390	26 NW	CBC News: the fifth estate		CBC News: The National (N)		CBC News: The National		CBC News: the fifth estate		National
	500	500	33 CNN	Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)				Larry King Live Joe Torre.		Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)		Cooper 360
sports	407	419	22 RSP	Pro Football Preview		Hockey	The Ultimate Fighter		UFC	Sportsnet Connected (Live)		Sportsnet
	400	400	30 TSN	SportsCentre	That's Hockey	SportsCentre	Off the Record	World Extreme Cagefighting (Taped) (CC)				SportsCentre
family	552	543	25 YTV	The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants ★★★ (2005) Amber Tamblyn. (CC)					Falcon Beach "Wake Jam"		Mystery Hnt.	Mystery Hnt.
	555	545	50 TEL	Totally Spies	Total Drama	6TEEN	6TEEN	Misadventures	Futurama	Father	Chicken	Life's a Zoo
variety	268	354	5 KNO	Arctic Mission: Voyage		Poirot "The Third-Floor Flat"		Dalziel and Pascoe (N) (CC)		Project Grizzly ★★★ (1996, Documentary)		
	575	583	20 CMT	Weddings	Hollywood	Pushing Tin ★★ (1999, Comedy-Drama) John Cusack, Billy Bob Thornton.					Pushing Tin ★★ (1999)	
	615	520	31 A&E	CSI: Miami "Throwing Heat"		Criminal Minds (CC)		CSI: Miami "Backstabbers"		CSI: Miami "Internal Affairs"		CSI: Miami
	521	560	34 TLC	Making Over America		What Not to Wear (CC)		Making Over America		What Not to Wear "Molly P."		Real Simple
	616	522	39 SHO	The Outer Limits (CC)		Da Vinci's Inquest (CC)		Testees (CC)	Kenny-Spenny	Webdreams	Sin Cities	Wife Swap
	294	650	47 TBS	(6:00) Head of State ★★		10 Items-Less	Sex and-City	Sex and-City	(:40) Elizabethtown ★★ (2005) Orlando Bloom. (CC)			
	603	561	52 FN	Diner, Drive-In	Diner, Drive-In	Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares		Challenge (CC)		Kylie Kwong	Gourmets	Diner, Drive-In
	320	621	60 CEN	(6:30) Citizen Duane ★ (2006)		Chaos Theory ★★ (2007) Ryan Reynolds.			The Holiday ★★ (2006) Cameron Diaz, Kate Winslet. (CC)			
	581	566	101 MTV	The City	The City	City Live After	Cribs (CC)	Bromance (CC)		The City	The City	MTV Presents

SATURDAY

VA	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime	251	308	3 CBC	NHL Hockey Minnesota Wild at Vancouver Canucks. (Live) (CC)					HNIC -- After Hours		News (CC)	HNIC Replay
	255	358	6 JOY	Chef School	E News	Her Sister's Keeper (2006, Suspense) Dahlia Salem. (CC)				Show Yours	G-Spot "HBO"	News (CC)
	250	321	9 CTV	W-FIVE-Musical Brain		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		News (N)
	252	336	11 GTV	Real Fight Club		Masterminds	Masterminds	Tank Overhaul "The Hellcat"		Go Deep "Speed Sailing"		News (N)
	256	389	12 VI	New Canoe	Island Week	The Road to Avonlea		Kool Countdown (CC)		Comedy Now Toby Hargrave.		Bravo! Fact
	253	359	13 CITY	Without a Trace (CC)		Less-Kind	Kaya (CC)	Fatal Reunion (2005) Erika Eleniak, David Millbern. (CC)				Role
	-	-	14 CW	CSI: NY "Live or Let Die"		Boston Legal (CC)		Boston Legal (CC)		CSI: NY "Super Men" (CC)		CSI: Miami
	289	381	15 CBS	Paid Program	Paid Program	Super Bowl-Commercials		NCIS "Recoil" (CC)		48 Hours Mystery (N) (CC)		News (N)
	287	379	16 NBC	Backroads	Inside Edition	Crusoe (N) (CC)		Saturday Night Live Sports Extra Sports-related sketches.				News (N)
	288	380	21 ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy!	Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy ★★ (2004)				Life on Mars (CC)		KOMO 4 News
	290	382	23 FOX	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Cops (N) (PA)	Cops (CC)	America's Most Wanted		News (N)	Most Wanted	Talkshow
news	502	390	26 NW	Doc Zone Battle for the Arctic.		Sat. Report	Fortune	Sat. Report	Mansbridge	Doc Zone Battle for the Arctic.		Sat. Report
	500	500	33 CNN	D.L. Hughley-News		Newsroom		Larry King Live		D.L. Hughley-News		Newsroom
sports	407	419	22 RSP	English Premier League Soccer				Best Damn Sports Show		Sportsnet Connected (Live)		PartyPoker.net
	400	400	30 TSN	SportsCentre (Live) (CC)			NFL Films	2009 Crashed Ice (CC)			Madden	SportsCentre
family	552	543	25 YTV	Team Galaxy	Team Galaxy	Zixx Level	Storm Hawks	Naruto (CC)	Bleach (CC)	Ghost	Ghost	Mystery Hnt.
	555	545	50 TEL	Beetlejuice ★★★ (1988) Michael Keaton, Alec Baldwin. (CC)				Carl2	Futurama	Mars Attacks! ★★ (1996) Jack Nicholson.		
variety	268	354	5 KNO	Planet Carnivore "Lions" (N)		Heartbeat "Danse Macabre"		Midsomer Murders "Dance With the Dead" (N) (CC)				Montreal Jazz
	575	583	20 CMT	Crossroads		Grand Ole Opry Live		Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Crossroads		Ed (CC)
	615	520	31 A&E	CSI: Miami "Body Count"		The Beast "Nadia" (CC)		CSI: Miami "Tinder Box"		CSI: Miami (CC)		CSI: Miami
	521	560	34 TLC	Real Estate	Deals on Bus	Jon & Kate	Jon & Kate	My First Home	My First Home	Real Estate	Deals on Bus	17 Kids-Count
	616	522	39 SHO	Mutant X "Fool for Love"		Second Sight (2007, Drama) Lexa Doig, Ty Olsson.				Click ★★ (2006) Adam Sandler. (CC)		
	294	650	47 TBS	(6:30) Failure to Launch ★★ (2006) (CC)			Trust Me "Before and After"		A Knight's Tale ★★ (2001) (PA) Heath Ledger. (CC)			
	603	561	52 FN	Hell's Kitchen (CC)		The F Word		Top Chef Super Bowl cook-off. (CC)			Good Eats	Hell's Kitchen
	320	621	60 CEN	U.S. of Tara	Secret Diary	21 ★★ (2008) Jim Sturgess, Kevin Spacey. Premiere. (CC)				Smokin' Aces ★★ (2007) Ben Affleck. (CC)		
	581	566	101 MTV	Cribs (CC)	Cribs (CC)	Cribs (CC)	Cribs (CC)	Cribs (CC)	Cribs (CC)	MTV Live	MTV News	After

SUNDAY

VA	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime	251	308	3 CBC	Heartland "Letting Go"		Marple: Murder Is Easy (2008, Mystery) Julia McKenzie. (CC)				CBC News: Sunday Night (N)		News (CC)
	255	358	6 JOY	The Best Years		Extreme Makeover: Home Edition "Tutwiler Family" (N) (CC)				Inside Hollywood Breaking up.		News (CC)
	250	321	9 CTV	NFL Football	News (N) (CC)		Two/Half Men	Criminal Minds (CC)		The Mentalist "Flame Red"		News (N)
	252	336	11 GTV	16:9 Picture	The Office "Stress Relief" (N)		American Dad	Family Guy	American Dad	The Simpsons	Family Guy	News (N)
	256	389	12 VI	Funniest Home Videos		Cold Case "Andy in C Minor"		Waydowntown ★★ (2000) Fabrizio Filippo, Don McKellar.				New Canoe
	253	359	13 CITY	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Murdoch Mysteries		Murdoch Mysteries		Murdoch Mysteries		Role
	-	-	14 CW	Jericho "Red Flag" (CC)		Throw Momma From the Train ★★★ (1987) Danny DeVito.				Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Cold Case
	289	381	15 CBS	CBS Reports (N) (CC)		Cold Case "Andy in C Minor"		The Unit "Sacrifice" (CC)		The Mentalist (CC)		News (N)
	287	379	16 NBC	NFL Football	The Office "Stress Relief" (N)		Sounder Super Search		M. Holmgren	Dateline NBC (CC)		News (N)
	288	380	21 ABC	Wipeout (Live) (CC)		Wipeout (CC)		Wipeout (CC)		Funniest Home Videos		KOMO 4 News
	290	382	23 FOX	Smarter Than a 5th Grader?		The Simpsons	American Dad	Family Guy	American Dad	News (N)	Q It Up Sports	House "Safe"
news	502	390	26 NW	Charles the Passionate Prince The life of Prince Charles. (N)				CBC News: Sunday Night		Charles the Passionate Prince (CC)		
	500	500	33 CNN	Newsroom		D.L. Hughley-News		Larry King Live		Newsroom		D.L. Hughley
sports	407	419	22 RSP	Saturday Night Poker		World Combat League (CC)		The Ultimate Fighter		Sportsnet Connected (Live)		Sportsnet
	400	400	30 TSN	SportsCentre (Live) (CC)			NFL	Premier League Poker II (Taped) (CC)				SportsCentre
family	552	543	25 YTV	(6:00) Are We There Yet? (CC)		SpongeBob	Prank Patrol	The Next Star (CC)		Adrenaline	Zixx Level	Mystery Hnt.
	555	545	50 TEL	Totally Spies	Totally Spies	6TEEN	6TEEN	Carl2	Futurama	Team America: World Police ★★★ (2004)		
variety	268	354	5 KNO	National Geographic		Doc Martin (CC)		Rebus "Let It Bleed" (N)		(:15) Dalziel and Pascoe (N)		Montreal Jazz
	575	583	20 CMT	Three Chords	Three Chords	Cheerleader Nation		Cheerleaders	Cheerleaders	Three Chords	Three Chords	Cheerleader
	615	520	31 A&E	The Sopranos "Cold Stones"		The Sopranos "Kaisha" (CC)		The Sopranos "The Ride"		The Sopranos "Moe 'n' Joe"		The Sopranos
	521	560	34 TLC	Mother Knows Sex (N) (CC)		My Husband's Three Wives		Anatomy of Sex (CC)		Mother Knows Sex (CC)		Polygamy
	616	522	39 SHO	The Guard "Waheguru" (CC)		Destination: Infestation (2007) Antonio Sabato Jr. (CC)				Damages "I Knew Your Pig"		The Guard
	294	650	47 TBS	(6:45) My Big Fat Greek Wedding ★★★ (CC)			(:45) RV ★★ (2006) Robin Williams, Jeff Daniels. (CC)				(:45) Clueless ★★★ (1995)	
	603	561	52 FN	The Next Food Network Star		The Heat	The Heat	Challenge (CC)		Iron Chef America (CC)		Next Star
	320	621	60 CEN	(6:15) Eragon ★★ (2006) (CC)		Three Chords	Three Chords	Rendition ★★ (2007, Suspense) Jake Gyllenhaal. (CC)				Bourne Ulti.
	581	566	101 MTV	Cribs (CC)	Cribs (CC)	After	MTV News	MTV Presents: Summer		Cribs (CC)	Cribs (CC)	City Live After

Not a wrestler for real
Looks like Mickey Rourke won't be stepping into the ring for WWE's Wrestlemania after all. Rourke was approached by WWE to make an appearance at the big event, but his rep has drop-kicked the plan. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

My weight reflects my life: Allen

PEOPLE Lily Allen says she has many reasons to "smile." The singer is feeling better with herself — and when she feels good, she keeps the weight off, people.com reports.

While promoting her new album It's Not Me, Allen, 23, says life "feels good," the press is treating her more kindly and the secret to being content with her body is to halt her urge to order French fries from room service in order to fill the happiness gap.

"The only reason I have lost weight is because I comfort eat when I'm not very happy," Allen tells U.K. tabloid the Sun.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Jagger headed for clothing line?

DESIGNER Mick Jagger has fuelled speculation he's set to follow in pal Dave Stewart's fashionable footsteps after meeting colourful designer Christian Audigier in Los Angeles on Wednesday, femalefirst.co.uk reports. The rocker and a bodyguard were spotted entering Audigier's office in Beverly Hills. The designer teamed up with Stewart in 2008 to launch the Rock Fabulous clothing line at Audigier's When I Move You Move trade show in Las Vegas.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

ScarJo's relationship advice? Dump him

RELATIONSHIPS Scarlett Johansson is "in love with love," femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The He's Just Not That Into You star, who married her boyfriend Ryan Reynolds in a secret ceremony in September, is still crazy for Ryan but isn't sure if the romance will fade in time.

When asked about the impact marriage has on relationships, Johansson replied: "I have no perspective on that — you should ask me in 25 years.

"I am really in love with love. I'm a lover not a fighter. I'm a real lover."

The 24-year-old actress also revealed she regularly encourages her friends to end their relationships when they turn to her for advice.

She added to Britain's Daily Mirror newspaper: "My friends and I talk about relationships and I probably over-analyze everything. But I usually come back to the same thing, 'If this person is making you crazy or doubt yourself, then get rid of him.'

"I always sort of come back to that. Whether or not my girlfriends stay with the guy at the time, they usually end up parting ways in the end."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

I'm not dumb, Paris says

IMAGE Paris Hilton says she sometimes acts dumb on television to get laughs, but in real life she's "a strong person" who's been through a lot, people.com reports.

Appearing on the British morning show GMTV to launch her new reality show Paris Hilton's British Best Friend, Hilton, 27, said she cultivated her dumb blonde image for her hit FOX reality show The Simple Life, co-starring Nicole Richie, and it became her shtick.

"For five seasons I was stuck doing this character," she says. "It was kind of hard always having to play that character when it's not who I am."

She adds, "I just say jokes but they think I'm serious, which I think is funny, and I think I kind of play up the image sometimes because — whatever — it's just entertainment."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

West boasts of shoe caretaker

FASHION Kanye West pays someone to clean his shoes, according to femalefirst.co.uk. The Stronger singer boasts he is so rich he hires someone to "take care" of his shoes — all 450 pairs of them.

He said: "I hire someone specially to take care of my shoes. They clean them, box them and take a picture of them so it's easier to find them."

West recently announced he had changed his name after launching a new range of footwear for Louis Vuitton, which was unveiled during Paris Fashion Week last week.

In a video message on his blog, the rapper said: "Due to what has happened — what has happened so severely when the red shoes hit the runway, I was forced to change my name to Martin Louis the King Jr. Address me as such."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Rowland drops her manager Knowles

CAREER Kelly Rowland has parted ways with her manager, Béyonce Knowles' father, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The former Destiny's Child singer and Mathew Knowles — who has managed Kelly since she was in the successful girl group and also looks after his daughters Beyoncé and Solange — agreed to separate earlier this week, with both parties insisting the split is "amicable."

It has been reported Rowland decided to call time on their professional relationship following a huge argument with the 58-year-old manager.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Ritchie's 'better off'

PEOPLE Madonna and Guy Ritchie's split may have looked ugly, but Ritchie's dad, John, tells In Touch that filing for divorce last October was a smart move.

"The worst thing would be if they reconciled," he said. "Guy is better off. He's in the States with the children at the moment." The older Ritchie notes that his former daughter-in-law is also moving on just fine. "She's been here with a chap, a friend of hers," he says. "We hope she does have a lot of boyfriends because it means she won't ever get back together with Guy."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Lohan's life in danger, her father says in blog

PLEA Lindsay Lohan's father has begged her fans to "intervene" to save her life, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

Michael Lohan — who has previously publicly discussed his hatred of the Mean Girls actress' girlfriend Samantha Ronson — claims Samantha is "destroying" the 22-year-old star's life, and is desperate for as many people as possible to try to convince her to leave the relationship.

He wrote on his blog: "I am asking everyone out their (sic) to intervene in every way possible to help Lindsay, and quite possibly, save her life. Help this wonderful, good hearted and gifted young lady to see what SaMANtha is doing to her and how she is destroying her life."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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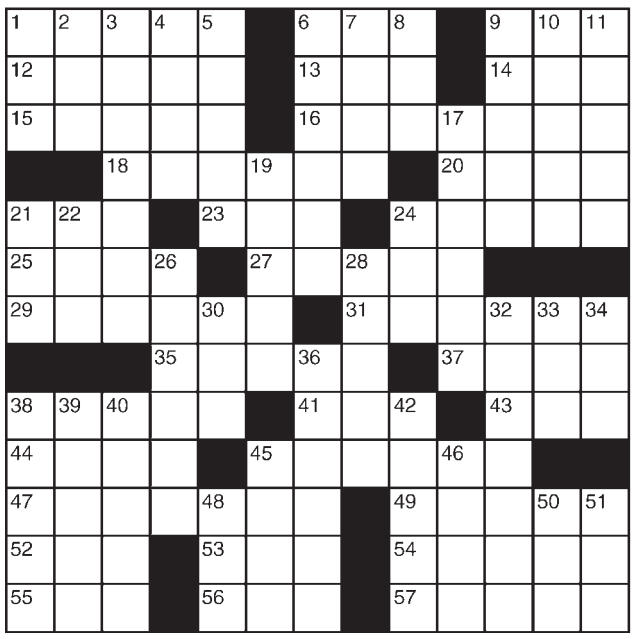

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

	4		9		3		6	
9								4
		7	4		1	9		
	5		8	1	6		7	
	8						5	
	2		3	5	9		1	
		1	7		8	2		
3								1
	6		1		5		8	

Crossword across

1 Ballroom offering
6 Peculiar
9 Bando of baseball lore
12 Hardly a brainiac
13 Sheepish remark
14 Expert
15 Having melody and harmony
16 Mad. Ave. music
18 Report card data
20 Ceremony
21 Hooter
23 Uncorrected
24 Western
25 Weeding tools
27 Cram, perhaps
29 Tile art
31 Actor Liam
35 Perch
37 Pebbles' pet
38 Inert gas
41 Second sequel notation
43 Different
44 Subsequently
45 Have membership
47 Paresthetic feelings
49 Cardiff's land
52 Singer DiFranco
53 Nevertheless
54 Vertical
55 Hatchery supply
56 Mound stat
57 Spiteful

Crossword down

1 Pose for a picture
2 Commotion
3 Rubs elbows
4 Piglet's papa
5 Rand's shrugger
6 Thing
7 Lectern location
8 Author Brown
9 Alley oops?
10 Mountain ridge
11 Runner-up
17 Showed signs of aging
19 "Saturday Night Fever" venue
21 Resistance measure
22 "Face/Off" director John
24 Praise in verse
26 Muumuu alternative
28 Up to the time that
30 Charged bit
32 Tennis match, often
33 Inseparable
34 Promptly
36 Nap
38 Oil of roses
39 African beast
40 Spirit in a bottle
42 Hawkeye
45 Batter ingredient, at times
46 California wine valley
48 Caustic solution
50 Have a bite
51 Firmament

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

A	R	M	S	■	G	A	T	■	O	A	H	U		
S	H	A	H	■	O	V	A	■	P	R	I	G		
P	E	R	I	■	T	E	L	■	I	T	L	L		
S	A	L	L	O	W	■	C	R	A	W	L	Y		
■	■	■	O	N	O	■	■	I	T	O	■	■		
O	U	C	H	■	R	E	N	D	E	R	E	D		
U	S	A	■	■	S	E	E	■	■	K	E	A		
R	E	T	I	C	E	N	T	■	A	S	K	S		
■	■	■	W	O	O	■	■	W	O	W	■	■	■	■
A	T	O	D	D	S	■	■	O	R	N	E	R	Y	
S	E	M	I	■	A	P	R	■	I	L	I	A		
I	R	A	N	■	R	A	T	■	N	U	L	L		
S	I	N	E	■	A	S	H	■	G	L	E	E		

1	3	7	8	9	4	5	6	2
6	5	4	3	1	2	9	7	8
9	2	8	5	7	6	3	4	1
4	8	1	9	3	7	6	2	5
5	6	3	2	4	8	7	1	9
7	9	2	1	6	5	4	8	3
8	7	5	4	2	9	1	3	6
3	4	9	6	8	1	2	5	7
2	1	6	7	5	3	8	9	4

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SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:
Under 13 min .....Genius
13-17 min.....Scholar
17-21 min .....Smart
21-25 min .....Not bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day

Pasta and Tuna Salad with Zucchini and Sundried Tomato Pesto

INGREDIENTS:
250 g pasta twists or spirals, such as fusilli or rotini
2 tbsp (25 ml) extra virgin olive oil
1 onion, chopped
1 garlic clove, chopped
2 zucchinis, thinly sliced
2 tsp (10 ml) caster sugar
2 tbsp (25 ml) sun-dried tomato pesto
1 tbsp (15 ml) white or red wine vinegar
2 tbsp (25 ml) capers
6 tomatoes, skinned, halved and cut into thin wedges
1 can (6 oz/170 g) tuna in water, drained and roughly flaked
6 black olives (not oil-packed), pitted and halved
Fresh Italian parsley to garnish

METHOD:
1. Cook pasta in boiling water according to the package instructions, until just al dente. Drain pasta, rinse with cold water and drain again.
2. While pasta is cooking, heat half of olive oil in medium saucepan. Add onion and garlic, and fry 3 minutes, stirring frequently, until softened. Add remaining olive oil and zucchinis and cook, stirring occasionally, 3 minutes.
3. Add sugar, sun-dried tomato pesto, wine vinegar and capers to onion and zucchini mixture. Heat for a few seconds, stirring until all ingredients have combined to form a dressing.
4. Stir in tomatoes, then transfer mixture to large mixing bowl and set aside to cool.
5. Add drained pasta to bowl, then gently mix in tuna and black olives. Divide salad among 4 plates or transfer to large serving bowl. Serve garnished with some Italian parsley leaves.

SERVES 4

rd.ca
For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
A truthful confession causes a friendship to ripen. Put off accepting an offer for a few weeks. No bad deed will be unpunished.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
An apology comes up after a family argument. A hypochondriac finally arrives in style. You'll start something, only to be interrupted.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Control your temper with a casual acquaintance. Stay out of dead-end friendships. Problems involve a tidal wave of indecision.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
An exciting experience is offered by an older man. A distressed person causes a travel delay. You can't get a grip on what must be done.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
A heart is broken by an unsettling decision. People are losing patience with what ails you. Random acts of kindness will make your day.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
Try a new approach to job difficulties. There'll be complaints about faulty equipment. Enjoy taking a flight of fancy with a manager.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Someone warms the cockles of your heart. Things will go right, for a change. Listen closely to a mystical story.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
A painful condition is caused by a bad habit. A colleague will disappear within two weeks. Careless supervision becomes an issue.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
You can start living life on your own terms. Accidents cause travel mayhem. Share the benefits of your labour.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
A foot ailment needs a soothing bath. Delay making a major purchase. A missing loved one needs more empathetic treatment.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
Restrain your temper over wacky behaviour. A loved one is struggling with a blessing in disguise. A report provokes curiosity and wonder.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
You'll be accused of sleep-walking through life. A qualified person has the best news. Shrug off a misunderstanding until later.

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